LETTERS

OF A

SOLITARY WANDERER.

VOL. III.

THE

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OF A

SOLITARY WANDERER:

CONTAINING

NARRATIVES

OF

VARIOUS DESCRIPTION.

By CHARLOTTE SMITH.

VOL. III.

London:

PRINTED BY AND FOR

SAMPSON LOW, BERWICK STREET, SOHO.

1801.

1912.18.20

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LETTERS, &c.

LETTER I.

YOU have heard of ſome eccentric man of fortune in England, who, without giving his family or friends the leaſt intimation of his intentions, made it a practice to diſappear for ſome weeks, and the firſt letters they received from him were dated from the wilds of the American continent, or from the interior parts of Aſia. As you have long been accuſtomed to what you call my romantic wanderings, you will not think the date of this letter very extraordinary, though it is from a country with which England is at war, and where it is ſup-

poſed that no Engliſhman would now voluntarily find himſelf.

You know I profeſs being a citizen of the world; and had it been my lot, as it has been that of ſome others, to be baniſhed from that boaſt of its natives, where I firſt chanced to ſee the light, I ſhould, I truſt, have a greater reſemblance in the way of enduring it, to one of my countrymen, than to the great Roman orator and ſtateſman, whoſe behaviour during his baniſhment, unjuſtly inflicted, does ſo little credit to his philoſophy; yet it might be imagined, that he who wrote that ſublime paſſage, beginning **Cum videmus ſpeciem primùm candonemque cœli*, might have endured his misfortunes with as much dignity, and from the ſame conſiderations as the Engliſh nobleman †, who, among many ſubjects of conſolation, ſo juſtly and

* Tuſcul. i. 28, 29.

† Henry St. John Viſcount Bolingbroke.

beautifully ſays—"Believe me, the providence of God has eſtabliſhed ſuch order in the world, that of all which belongs to us the leaſt valuable parts alone can fall under the will of others; whatever is beſt, lies out of the reach of human power, and can neither be given nor taken away. Such is this great and beautiful work of nature, the world; ſuch is the mind of man, which contemplates and admires that world, whereof it conſtitutes the nobleſt part; theſe are inſeparably ours, and as long as we remain in one, we ſhall enjoy the other. Let us march, therefore, intrepidly wherever we are led by the courſe of human accidents. Whitherſoever they lead us, on what coaſt ſoever we are thrown by them, we ſhall not find ourſelves abſolutely ſtrangers; we ſhall meet with men and women, creatures of the ſame figures, endowed with the ſame faculties, and born under the ſame laws

of nature; we ſhall ſee the ſame virtues and vices flowing from the ſame general principles, but varied in a thouſand different and contrary modes, according to that infinite variety of laws and cuſtoms, which is eſtabliſhed for the ſame univerſal end. We ſhall feel the ſame revolution of ſeaſons; and the ſame ſun and moon will guide the courſe of our year. The azure vault, beſpangled with ſtars, will be every where ſpread over our heads. There is no part of the world from whence we may not admire thoſe planets, which roll, like ours, in different orbits round the ſame central ſun; from whence we may not diſcover an object ſtill more ſtupendous, that army of fixed ſtars, hung up in the immenſe ſpace of the univerſe: innumerable ſuns, whoſe beams enlighten and cheriſh the unknown worlds which revolve around them; and whilſt I am elevated by ſuch contemplations as theſe, while my ſoul

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is thus raiſed up to Heaven, it imports me little what ground I tread upon*."

This is the author of whom Mr. Burke ſays, inquires "Who reads Bolingbroke?" This is the writer who is placed among thoſe that are prohibited to the young ſtudent, and who is ſtigmatized as an Atheiſt.

But you may, perhaps, exclaim, "Yea, but all this did I know before;" and inquire how I came to have occaſion, at this particular time, to declaim on the propriety of bearing with calmneſs a ſtate of exile or removal from my native country. Thus then it happened:

Some days after I laſt wrote to you, concluding the long and eventful hiſtory of my Weſt-India friends, I met by accident the commander of a trading veſſel, then in the port of Liverpool,

* Not having the French, I have taken this from what is certainly not an elegant, though it may be a faithful, tranſlation; and I have changed three or four words, which appeared to me very ill placed.

and as to ſtudy the effect that different modes of life have on the human character, often amuſes me, I entered into converſation with him, and found, that under a very rough exterior he had a good deal of nautical information, and ſome general intelligence, and appeared withal to be a very honeſt and humane man; for he told me, that having been two voyages to the coaſt of Africa, while he was yet an apprentice, he had an opportunity of engaging in it, very advantageouſly on his own account:—"But," ſaid he, "I could not bear it, Sir, it made me unhappy; leſs profit and a clear conſcience is more what ſuits me: ſo, I have now a little tight veſſel, of which I am three parts owner, which trades to the Mediterranean. I am going in four or five days, with ſome other merchant-men, under convoy of an armed ſloop, to Gibraltar, and from thence to Leghorn and Genoa." As my new acquaintance thus ſpoke, it ſuddenly

denly occurred to me that I ſhould like to go as a paſſenger, having long had ſome curioſity to viſit Gibraltar, and aſſuring myſelf I could never more agreeably gratify my inclination, as I have two friends and many acquaintance who happen now to be in garriſon there, I did not long meditate on this ſcheme before I determined to purſue it. The accommodations on board the veſſel were better than I expected; I had nothing to do but to procure a proper perſon to take charge home of my horſes, which you know I conſider as creatures that merit my affection and care, more than half the race of the animal to the claſs of which I belong; and having ſettled that point with Arnold, to his and my own ſatisfaction, I embarked; that faithful fellow willingly accompanying me, and we left the port of Liverpool with a fair wind on the 30th of June.

Nothing could be pleaſanter than was the commencement of the voyage. It

blew a ſteady gale immediately down St. George's Channel, now unruffled by thoſe guſts which often make it ſo hazardous to navigate. The coaſts of both England and Ireland were almoſt continually in view. This is not the place to tell you, what were my reflections as I beheld them. At length we loſt ſight of the Britiſh iſlands, and were in the great Atlantic Ocean. As you have croſſed it, I will not give you any deſcription of the effect which this immenſe body of water, the great medium of communication between the new and the old world, has on the mind; nor ſhall I dwell very minutely on the circumſtances of my own adventure, but content myſelf with relating, in a few words, that about eight leagues from Uſhant our convoy ſuddenly left us; and the next day we were purſued by two French cutters, whom we could not eſcape by ſailing, and whoſe attack it would have been folly to have reſiſted.

My

My poor friend, the captain proprietor, who ſaw himſelf ſo great a ſufferer, was compelled to content himſelf with curſing very heartily both the captain of the convoying ſloop and his own deſtiny; and having given vent to his feelings, he prepared to ſubmit with a good grace to what was inevitable, and we were carried priſoners to Rochfort, from whence the two armed cutters had ſailed only three days before.

Behold then your wandering friend endeavouring to put all his philoſophy in practice; and to ſpeculate, while he felt the effects in his own perſon, on the diſpoſition of mankind to prey upon and annoy their fellow beings. I had, however, much leſs occaſion than I imagined I ſhould have for the exertion of the virtues of patience and acquieſcence. Theſe terrible republicans, flibuſtiers and buccaneers, as they were by profeſſion, were not cruel or even inſolent. I was acquainted with ſome of thoſe men

who have, through the extraordinary viciſſitudes of the revolution, continued ſtill to preſerve their lives without forfeiting their integrity. To theſe, who might I knew be heard of in the neighbourhood of Paris, I was permitted to write. Replies came in the due courſe of the poſt, and I much doubt whether, from the ſecretaries and commiſſioners under the old regime, I ſhould have received, on ſuch an occaſion, anſwers ſo ſpeedy or ſo ſatisfactory. My captors were directed immediately to releaſe me and my ſervant with all our perſonal property; and I received at the ſame time paſſports, enabling me to travel without moleſtation through any part of France for the ſpace of ſix months, and then to be allowed to paſs any barrier, or take ſhipping at any port I might prefer. Nothing could be more calculated for my accommodation and ſecurity. Do not, however, imagine that I was ſelfiſh enough to be content with my own

own liberty and ſafety. I did not quit Rochfort, till by the ſame means I had uſed to obtain thoſe ends, I had procured an order to the captors to accept a reaſonable ranſom of my friendly old commander, and to releaſe him from his confinement, and give him his parole till he ſhould have time to negociate for that purpoſe; then, having given him an order on my banker's in London, a little to aſſiſt him through this exigence, I took leave of him, and determined, ſince my viſit to Gibraltar was for the preſent ſuſpended, to avail myſelf of my paſſport to travel through France to Germany, whither I intended to go, by way of Italy, after I had left Gibraltar.

I felt hardly ſorry for this change in my plan, though it had been involuntarily made; for this powerful nation, which I have from early youth been in habits of conſidering under another form of government, cannot fail to preſent a ſpectacle at this period well worth

conſidering. Not only as the change it had undergone, and is indeed ſtill undergoing, affected the general but the individual character of the people, hitherto marked by every thing that was moſt oppoſite to what I was now taught to expect among them.

I had long deſired to ſee the middle provinces of France, and therefore I took the road through Poitou to the Orleanois, and intended to croſs the Loire in that part of its courſe that lies between Saumur and Tours, of which I had heard ſuch a deſcription, that I had long felt a great inclination to know whether the ideas I had entertained of its beauty, and that of the ſurrounding country, were not beyond the truth.

But certainly it would be difficult even with more laboured deſcriptions than I am diſpoſed to make, to do juſtice to the lovelineſs of the ſcenery in this part of France. Square patches of vineyards are very far from beautiful

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on a plain; but here are vines planted on hills, and ſhagging like copſe wood in England, high and rough acclivities, of various forms; and often hanging over the Loire, a river of reſplendent beauty, while the ſummits of theſe heights are frequently crowned by ruins of fortifications, or the towers of a convent are ſeen on their ſides. Vineyards thus diſpoſed are beautiful in landſcape, and the Engliſhman moſt partial to his own country muſt, however reluctantly, acknowledge the richneſs and variety of this part of France —— But deſcription, however ſtudied, and though a new language has been created for it, ſeldom conveys a clear idea of the place deſcribed, the materials ſo infinitely diverſified, with which nature produces her great effects, earth, trees, and water, may be combined with the pencil, but the pen, I think, fails. A ſimple home landſcape, a repoſe, or ſome ſtriking and ſublime ſcene, diverſified with figures,

may

may ſometimes be ſtrikingly deſcribed; but I recollect you agreed with me that the eternal ſameneſs of deſcription in works of fancy, that have obtained ſome celebrity, fatigued you ſo much, that you muſt have deſiſted from reading them, even if the books had otherwiſe been to your taſte. I therefore forbear to tell you of woods, and rocks, and towers, at leaſt till I reach Blois, where, if I find the place at all reſembling the idea I have formed of it, it will be difficult not to attempt conveying to you ſome of the melancholy pleaſure I ſhall myſelf feel, however inadequate the medium may be, through which the communication muſt be made.

Bourges, Auguſt 18th.

I reached this place two days ſince. After an early ſupper, or, if you will, a dinner at an Engliſh hour, on what England does not in any plenty afford, partridges and quails, with a deſert of the fineſt fruit in the world, I wandered about

about the venerable cathedral, and then among the ruins of the fortifications and ancient buildings, many of them Roman, which are within a mile of the place. I obſerved a gentleman with two little girls, and a boy about eleven years old, who appeared to be like me, contemplating theſe monuments of ages paſt, yet not quite with the ſame deſign, for his purpoſe ſeemed to be to inſtruct his ſon in taking views of theſe objects, under the appearance they now aſſumed; every buttreſs, or rough projecting battlement, catching the glowing horizontal rays of the evening ſun; while the little girls were running about to gather plants, with which they returned to their father, each trying to attract his attention by producing what they ſuppoſed to be the moſt uncommon of that variety with which the rocks or the fragments of ruins were luxuriantly fringed. The father was a tall good figure, and apparently about five-and-thirty; the children

dren were all handſome, but the ſpirited countenance of one of the little girls particularly attracted me. She and her ſiſter approached the place where I was myſelf botanizing, having found here the white ſpleenwort* in fructification, which though it is among our indigenous plants, and I have often ſearched for it, I never met with it in England. I was diſpoſing of my acquiſition ſo as to preſerve it, till I could put it into my book; when this little charmer, after obſerving me for ſome time, came up to me, and giving me another and a better ſpecimen of the ſame plant, ſaid, in her own language, that if Monſieur loved plants, ſhe would have the pleaſure of preſenting him with ſome ſhe had gathered for her papa.—The grace and ſweetneſs of the lovely little creature I ſhould vainly attempt to deſcribe. I expreſſed my gratitude, and at the ſame

* Aſplenium cuta muraria—White ſpleenwort, or maiden-hair.

time

time my unwillingneſs to rob her papa of the fruits of her herbalizing; but ſhe aſſured me he would be pleaſed if I would accept them, and produced from a little wicker-baſket the polypody* of the rocks, which, though not common, I never happened to have found in fructification, and a feſtoon of the elegant ivy-leaved toad-flax†, of which, though I have ſeen it growing plentifully in England, and particularly on ſome of the old walls about Oxford, there are doubts whether it be a native of our iſland. I remember to have remarked a paling entirely covered with it at St. Cloud ſome years ſince; but I thought what this little nymph-like creature now gave me, though much of the bloom was paſſed, exceeded in luxuriance any ſpecimen I had ever before ſeen.

* Polypodium frondibus ſubbipinnatis lanceolatis, &c. Sp. Pl. 1550.

† Antirrhinum Cymbalaria. It is figured in Curtis's Flora Londinenſis, 57.

You will believe that I was delighted with the graceful manner of the infant botaniſt, and thankfully accepting her preſent, entered into converſation with her, and was ſurpriſed at the readineſs with which ſhe told me the names in French of theſe and many other plants, with which her baſket was filled; but by this time her father, who had been appriſed by the younger girl of Emily's converſation with a ſtranger, came up, and apologized for his daughter's intruſion. You will ſuppoſe that I failed not to expreſs the admiration I really felt. I found that he had retired from public life, deſpairing of the cauſe in which he had at firſt entered with all the zeal which a real love of his country could feel; and that, after having ſuffered conſiderably in his fortune, he had, by a peculiar felicity, or rather becauſe he was generally beloved, been ſuffered to retire to a part of what remained, where, ſurrounded by his children (to whoſe

mother

mother he is tenderly attached), he enjoys more happineſs than he would have done had he continued in public life, whatever turn the affairs of France had taken.

It ſeemed as if attracted mutually towards each other, and not waiting for forms, our acquaintance was no longer of yeſterday, when the day after our firſt meeting he gave me an invitation to his houſe, with an air of ſimple hoſpitality, which inſtantly determined me to accept it. I never ſaw a group of people who ſo immediately intereſted me; and, what does not always happen, I liked them better as I ſaw more of them. I was pleaſed with the manners of the parents towards each other, and towards their children. Young as the boys are, they are treated rather like beings who underſtand, and may be governed by, reaſon, than like children, who are to be bribed or terrified into knowledge and obedience.—Without having adopted any of thoſe

ſyſtems, which, however ſpecious in theory, are always found defective in practice, De Vezelai is at once loved and obeyed. I inquired, in what principles he had educated his ſons as to politics. "I have made them read," replied he, "and hope I have taught them to reflect on what they have read. I have carefully avoided giving them any bias, by ſaying to them, You are to think ſo and ſo becauſe *I* do—This or this is *my* opinion, and *therefore* ought to be yours. I endeavour to make them honeſt men, and to give them ſound principles of moral rectitude; and I truſt, from ſuch an education, that whatever may be the ſtate of their country, when they ſhall be called into her ſervice they will ſerve her with honour, however humble may be the rank aſſigned them."

I dined with my newly acquired friend yeſterday. His houſe is neater, and more abounding in the leſſer comforts than thoſe I uſed to ſee in this country,

country, even in more proſperous times. The *nonchalance*, or what I ought rather to call the gay inconſequence, of the French character, which I often thought favoured too much of want of feeling, is, in the perſons of De Vezelai and his wife, tempered by a ſort of melancholy, ariſing from their recollection of the convulſions they have witneſſed, and their apprehenſion of what is to come. I ſometimes obſerve them looking at their children with that ſort of doubting tenderneſs, which it is ſo natural to feel in reflecting on the future fate of creatures to whom we have given life—in the preſervation of whoſe health, and in attending to whoſe inſtruction, we are conſtantly occupied, yet to whom we cannot ſecure happineſs.

Some of De Vezelai's near relations emigrated at an early period of the revolution. He might have poſſeſſed himſelf of their conſiderable property almoſt immediately, but he took meaſures

to preſerve it for them. One of them, who had been on political accounts his greateſt enemy, made deſperate by the diſtreſſes he underwent in a foreign country, ſuddenly appeared before him, and, even while he uttered the ſevereſt reproaches for the part he had taken, put his life into the hands of him whoſe conduct he profeſſed to abhor. De Vezelai, at the hazard of his own life and the ſafety of his family, protected him; when his ſtay became too dangerous, ſecured his retreat; and now ſupplies him with money in his exile; though De Vezelai is ſo far from being in affluent circumſtances, that his only ſupport and reſource are in his farm and vineyard, which he cultivates himſelf—not merely as a ſuperintendent, but actually labouring with his own hands—while his two boys exert all their little ſtrength to aſſiſt him. I have ſeen him return with his hoe on his ſhoulder, the boys too loaded with their working-tools,

and

and perhaps a baſket of the fineſt grapes or figs, the preſent of ſome of their fellow-labourers to their mother. I have witneſſed the delicious ſupper that followed a day of patriarchal toil, and have compared it with the ſumptuous repaſts to which I was ſometimes a witneſs in the younger part of my life, when, after the fatigue of a late debate, I have remarked the trembling hands and hollow eyes of a cabal of ſtateſmen—countenances marked with uneaſy paſſions, and minds evidently at work each for his own advantage:—and having made this compariſon, my friend, my thoughts almoſt involuntarily went on, to inquire how it was, that men purſue Happineſs through ſo much toil and fatigue, yet never overtake her, while ſhe ſeems, at leaſt in this delightful region of the earth, to ſmile at every cottage door, and invite the weary wanderer to come in.

The people here have often been de-

ſcribed as gay even to infantine thoughtleſsneſs; for it amazes an Engliſhman that creatures ſo poor ſhould be ſo cheerful: but he calculates as a native of a very different country, where, from the high price of the neceſſaries of life, to which the price of labour bears no proportion, the poor live with extreme difficulty, and are in winter particularly expoſed to very great hardſhips; whilſt here the peaſant, though not better paid, has fewer wants, and thoſe more eaſily ſupplied. However poor they may appear to us, and however inferior their cottages are to thoſe of England, they are not without conveniences, and even luxuries. *Un bon habit de dimanche* is poſſeſſed by every member of the family. The women have little ornaments, not more coſtly perhaps than the long heavy cloak of our cottagers wives, but infinitely ſmarter and more becoming; and the moſt auſtere of their prieſts, when prieſts were the village law-

law-givers, never objected to their pa-riſhioners meeting to dance before the *Cour d'honneur* of the Seigneur, or in ſome other accuſtomed ſpot, after hearing maſs on Sundays and holidays. Nor can I think this wrong: ſurely the God of mercy and goodneſs cannot be better praiſed than by cheerfulneſs of heart. If the whole hiſtory of man were not full of inſtances of folly and abſurdity, one ſhould be aſtoniſhed to conſider the perverſion of reaſon, that has made him the ſlave of the moſt contemptible prejudice, and thrown a gloom over that devotion to the Creator, which can never be ſo warm and ſo ſincere as when it ariſes from a view of beings enjoying their exiſtence, beneath the ſun which he has lit up, on the green earth ſo adorned with beauty and prolific of bleſſings. Oh! how much ſurely might be done, if, inſtead of dogmatizing, and bewildering our-

ſelves in the endleſs labyrinth of theological diſpute, and deſtroying each other for a difference of opinion, or of country, we were to inculcate and adhere to the few ſimple axioms that are felt by every man to be true, and known to be thoſe only which can contribute to content! I think with reluctance of returning to the cold gloom and dark atmoſphere of winter in London, and laſt night took, with undeſcribable regret, my laſt leave of Madame de Vezelai and her children; for her huſband accompanies me part of the way. Often will this amiable family return to my remembrance, ſuch as I ſaw them laſt night—aſſembled in a kind of arbour, the treillage that formed it covered with vines; the ſoft air wafting the perfumes of oranges and pomegranates; and, beneath, an extenſive proſpect over the courſe of the river. I would cheriſh the recollection of the picture ſuch as I then

I then beheld it, and forget, if I could, how ſoon accident may, and how certainly time will, change and deface it! I go to-morrow on my way to Blois.

Adieu.

LETTER II.

DO you recollect the manner in which the very intereſting little Novel called *Le Mariage de Vengeance** is introduced in Gil Blas? At the Château of Donna Elvira de Pinarés, where an accident occaſions the lady whom he ſerved to remain for two days, an hiſtorical picture repreſenting a tragical event is remarked, which brings on a relation of the circumſtances of the ſtory. Not exactly like this, becauſe it was only a portrait, but in conſequence of ſuch an incident, I became poſſeſſed of an hiſtory, which I ſhall relate to you; while

* From which was taken the tragedy of Tancred and Sigiſmunda.

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I endeavour to convey to your imagination ſome idea of the places where ſome of the events occurred, and which I have paſſed three days in examining.

De Vezelai, among other remains of the ſplendour of the houſes he inherited from a race of rich and honourable anceſtors, has ſaved a few family portraits, which hang in his eating-parlour: among them was that of a young woman, in the coſtume of the age of Henry the Fourth, the expreſſion of whoſe countenance I thought moſt ſingularly intereſting, though it would be very difficult for me to deſcribe it. I admired the portrait; and De Vezelai, in anſwer to my inquiry whom it repreſented, told me it was a lady whoſe beauty, merit, and misfortunes, had rendered her remarkable above two hundred years ago. "And you are going," ſaid he, "in your journey to Amboiſe and Blois, to viſit the very ſcenes where ſhe was an actor and a ſufferer. In conſequence of my becoming poſſeſſed

poſſeſſed of a great number of manuſcript memoirs, letters, and papers that belonged to my family, I have made out the whole ſtory of her life; and if you have any curioſity to read it, it is much at your ſervice. It may ſerve to amuſe you for an evening or two, when, having ſeen all the town you may happen to be in has of antiquities or curioſities, you retire for the night to an inn."

You will believe that I eagerly embraced this obliging offer; and having promiſed De Vezelai to return it carefully by a conveyance he pointed out to me, I now haſten to tranſlate and tranſcribe it, becauſe it is eaſier for me to do the former, than copy the old French in which he has purpoſely preſerved great part of the narrative. I ſhall give it you in a modern dreſs.

"AMONG the few Proteſtant lords who eſcaped the horrors of the fatal night of the 24th of Auguſt, 1572, and, flying from Paris with only their lives, joined their indignant fellow-ſufferers from other parts of France, and ſhut themſelves up in Rochelle, Philibert Clarençal, Seigneur of Montrichard and Comte de Beauvilliers, was one of thoſe who, under the appearance of fearleſs fortitude, concealed the deepeſt anguiſh that could torture the heart of a huſband and a father.

"About three weeks before that deteſted night, which fixes an everlaſting ſtain on the government under which ſo infamous a ſcene was acted, the Comte de Beauvilliers was prevailed upon, very much againſt his own judgment, to meet at Paris the Admiral de Coligny and other Calviniſt chiefs, who had been ſo artfully decoyed thither under pretence of a general reconciliation

ation between the two parties, and to do honour to the nuptials of the King of Navarre, with Margaret de Valois, the ſiſter of the King of France; a union that was to be the pledge of future good underſtanding and friendſhip between thoſe of the old religion and the Huguenots, as the Proteſtants were then called.

"De Beauvilliers, in reluctantly quitting his caſtle and fortreſs of Montrichard, had left there a wife whom he paſſionately loved, and three children—two lovely girls, one of eleven, the other of eight years old, and a ſon under the age of two years; the only boy of five born to him, that had ſurvived longer than two months. On all theſe children their parents doted with exceſſive fondneſs, and de Beauvilliers ſaw in his ſon the laſt hope of an illuſtrious houſe—the only male heir of one of the moſt ancient families of France.

"Having eſcaped with extreme difficulty from the death intended him at Paris,

Paris, he fled in the diſguiſe of a ſervant to Montrichard, ſituated in the Orleanois, three leagues from Amboiſe. And either the order for continuing the maſſacre had not been received there, or thoſe to whom it was entruſted were not ſtrong enough to execute it; for he found his wife and children in ſafety, and as he believed ſecure, in being ſurrounded by faithful ſervants, and dependants attached to them and to him by many benefits and univerſal benevolence. An armed guard was always on the alert in and about the Caſtle of Montrichard, and, devoted as their lords were to the Huguenot cauſe, their virtues appeared to have conquered the prejudice of bigotry itſelf, and it was imagined that even the Catholic peaſantry on the domain would zealouſly protect their beloved Seigneur from every attempt that could have been made either againſt him or his family.

" Under this impreſſion the Count de Beauvilliers

Beauvilliers yielded, though with great reluctance, to the earneſt entreaties and repreſentations of his wife, who implored him to conſult the ſafety of thoſe he moſt loved by preſerving his own life.—'Ah! reflect,' cried ſhe, 'on the inveterate enmity which the Queen and her party have long borne towards you! Me and my children they will ſpare, becauſe we, without you, are nothing; but Beauvilliers, who can command ſo many hands and influence ſo many hearts againſt them, they will never ceaſe to purſue. What defence can this Caſtle make, ſhould even a ſmall force be ſent againſt it? And, faithful as we have reaſon to hope our vaſſals are, can we forget how much common minds are influenced by ſucceſs, and how ſoon that fidelity may be ſhaken, which too probably depends only on the power we poſſeſſed to benefit thoſe who profeſs it? Believe me, my lord, by your flight you will not deſert, you will protect your

your wife and your children, who will find their ſecurity in yours.'

" By ſuch arguments from a wife ſo beloved, who had moſt power to perſuade him, joined with thoſe of the concierge of his Caſtle, and others of the people around him, whom De Beauvilliers thought moſt ſincerely attached to him, he was at length prevailed upon to quit Montrichard, after remaining there only four-and-twenty hours. With a heart oppreſſed by fearful forebodings of evil, which all his reaſon did not enable him to ſubdue, De Beauvilliers took leave of the objects deareſt to him on earth; and, as he croſſed the laſt foſſé that ſurrounded the ancient habitation of his anceſtors, omens ſeemed to threaten from every grey and frowning battlement above, that told him he ſhould reviſit it no more.

" He arrived without diſcovery at Rochelle, where, when he once entered, he knew it would be very difficult, if not

not impoſſible, for him to hear from his family. Alas! that family ſoon felt how fatal it was to be without the friend and protector, whoſe preſence however, might not long have ſaved them from the horrors that fanaticiſm prepared for them. The Vidame de Boiſdauphin, the brother of Madame de Beauvilliers, had been, like her, educated in the reformed religion; but he was of a character too haughty and ambitious to ſuffer that the prejudices of his youth ſhould impede his way to riches and to honour; long ſince, therefore, he had declared himſelf the moſt zealous ſervant of the Queen Mother; and he had too little principle, and too many vices, not to become one of the moſt uſeful of her adherents.—He had long ſince ſeparated himſelf wholly from his family, and would hardly have recollected the exiſtence of his ſiſter, if the preſent conjuncture had not offered an occaſion too favourable to the gratification of his ruling paſſions. It

was

was by his means that, their protector being far from them, the unfortunate wife and children of De Beauvilliers were delivered up to the inhumanity of the monks of a convent adjoining to the Caſtle of Montrichard. The mother was torn from the children, and treated with ſuch ſeverity, that ſhe ſurvived only three weeks the rigorous methods which were uſed to compel her to renounce what they termed her hereſy. Her ſon, removed from her tender vigilance, languiſhed only a few months longer, and then followed her to the grave; while her two daughters were, as heireſſes to the houſe of Beauvilliers, placed by order of Catharine de Medicis, the Queen Mother, under the guardianſhip of their uncle the Vidame de Boiſdauphin, who ſent his own creatures to Montrichard, and entruſted the care of his two nieces to the abbeſs of the neareſt monaſtery, the ſociety of which were called the Ladies of St. Francis.

"But

"But Coriſande, the eldeſt of the unfortunate children of De Beauvilliers, was no longer of an age to ſuffer this change of circumſtances without feeling all its horrors. Her underſtanding was above her years; and her father, a man of ſtrong ſenſe, and of a domeſtic turn very unuſual in perſons of his rank, had taken infinite pleaſure in cultivating her mind, and inſtructing her in the religion he had himſelf choſen becauſe his reaſon approved it. The mother of Coriſande, one of the moſt lovely and amiable women of her time, having loſt many of her children in their infancy, was ſo tenderly attached to thoſe who ſurvived, that ſhe hardly ever ſuffered them to be abſent from her; and had dedicated to them thoſe hours which others of her rank and perſonal beauty gave, at that diſſolute period, to very different purſuits. Deprived ſuddenly of ſuch parents—uncertain of the fate of her father, but too well aſſured that

ſhe had loſt her mother for ever—the young but moſt unhappy Coriſande felt, and expreſſed, only indignation and abhorrence towards thoſe who had occaſioned the barbarous ſeparation; while her ſiſter Pauline, whoſe little heart was agitated with ſorrow, which the terror inſpired by thoſe about her obliged her to conceal, ſoon faded like the pale and delicate exotic expoſed to the tempeſt of the North; and Coriſande, within a year, mourned, in renewed anguiſh, over the laſt of her relations. It was a cruel aggravation of the ſufferings of the unfortunate girl, that ſhe was not even allowed to weep in peace. The cold and hard-hearted bigots, into whoſe hands ſhe had fallen, perſecuted her inceſſantly with their exhortations to renounce the errors of her education; they bluſhed not to repreſent the miſeries of her family as the viſitation of Heaven, for its apoſtacy from the faith of its anceſtors; they dared to call the evils their

party

party had inflicted, the acts of the God of mercy. Coriſande, however, was of a diſpoſition not likely to yield either to theſe arts, or thoſe of a leſs inhuman yet hardly leſs tormenting deſcription, when from menaces and denunciations they had recourſe to cajoleries and artifice; when they repreſented how much conſideration ſhe would obtain at court, if ſhe was reclaimed from the wretched errors of her education. They flattered her beauty; and, extolling her underſtanding, hinted that Heaven might have deſigned her for ſome high ſtation in the world, and that there was none to which ſhe might not pretend, were but the fatal impediment removed of her being an Huguenot.

"It was with aſtoniſhment theſe women as well as their prieſts perceived, that all their attempts to gain on ſo young a mind were repelled with a ſtrength of reaſoning which often baffled and ſilenced the moſt artful among them.—

Though

Though ſeparated from even the domeſtics of her father, and denied any intercourſe with whoever had belonged to him, ſo that ſhe never heard his name mentioned but in the way of reproach and contumely, Coriſande was ſtill perſuaded that her father lived; and, amidſt the ſevereſt of her trials, ſhe ſtrengthened her reſolution, by the firm belief, that ſhe ſhould one day receive, in the approbation of that beloved parent, the deareſt recompenſe for her conſtancy and her ſufferings.

But the Vidame of Boiſdauphin, whoſe views were very different, determined that no repugnance on the part of his niece ſhould prevent his purſuing them. He had ſo little principle, or feeling, that the life of this deſolate orphan might not have been ſecure, had not the next male heir of De Beauvilliers been even higher in favour at the court of Charles the Ninth than he was himſelf; and he foreſaw, that the death of his ſur-

viving niece would ſerve only to enrich and aggrandiſe another, while by diſpoſing of her in marriage, he, as her natural guardian and uncle, could form alliances highly advantageous to himſelf. Coriſande was now the ſole heireſs to the property of the noble houſe of Beauvilliers: for her father, if he yet lived, was proſcribed; his party was declining, by the death or temporiſing of its leaders; and it appeared unlikely, that the Proteſtants could ever again retrieve their fallen fortunes. Boiſdauphin, who deteſted his brother-in-law becauſe he had injured him, knew, that none of the misfortunes that had yet befallen that unhappy man would be heavier to him than the knowledge that his daughter was diſpoſed of by the direction of the Queen Mother and her creatures, whom he had ſo much reaſon to abhor.

Among the infinite number of thoſe abuſes of ſovereign power which have been only gradually reſiſted as men have been

been taught to think, none now appears more hatefully and wickedly oppreſſive than that which left to the king the tutelage of rich orphans, and gave them the right of diſpoſing of the heirs of noblemen whoſe birth or opulence could ſtrengthen their own intereſt. At the period when Coriſande fell into the power of her uncle, this uſurped prerogative was at its height. Boiſdauphin ſaw, that, by procuring it it to be exerted in his favour, he might, through the alliance he ſhould form for Coriſande, gratify his ambition, while there was no chance of his poſſeſſing her fortune.

The wretched monarch Charles the Ninth ſurvived the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew only two years. Suffering under the moſt dreadful diſeaſe, and diſtracted by the recollection of the murders which he had directed, while the cries of the wounded and dying Calviniſts continually rang in his ears; he died

in agonies that would have touched with remorſe, and urged to repentance, any heart but that of his mother, Catharine de Medicis.

But in the unfeminine and vindictive breaſt of that woman malignity never ſlept; and while her ſon was dying, ſhe directed the execution of the brave and gallant Montgomeri, who had undeſignedly occaſioned, in a tournament, the death of her huſband, Henry the Second. Montgomeri, however, was a Hugonot; which gave a greater zeſt to her vengeance.

In her eagerneſs to recall the King of Poland, ſhe hardly attended to the funeral obſequies of that unhappy ſon, whom ſhe had haſtened, loaded with guilt and anguiſh, to the grave. Henry, who had reluctantly accepted the elective crown of Poland, which he had only diſgraced while he held it, returned to reign in France, where the voluptuous

tuous gaiety and looſe manners, that had obtained ſince the reign of Francis the Firſt, increaſed amid all the miſeries of a civil war. The people were impoveriſhed, and compelled to take one ſide or the other for a ſubſiſtence. The Catholic Lords attached themſelves to the court, that they might ſhare its luxuries; while many of thoſe of the Calviniſt perſuaſion were either ſhut up in the ſtrong towns they yet held, or in their own caſtles converted into fortreſſes; or they wandered about in parties, annoying the enemy as they could, ſometimes adhering to and ſometimes abandoning the Henry of Bourbon, King of Navarre.

The character of Henry of Valois, who ſucceeded his brother Charles the Ninth, appeared not wholly deſtitute of virtues while he was Duke of Anjou; but he was no ſooner exalted to the throne of France, than theſe ſhadows of virtue diſappeared entirely. Diſgraced by follies that the moſt trifling woman would

be aſhamed of, the effeminacy* and debauchery in which he indulged himſelf diminiſhed not the ſpirit of perſecution. His mother, to whom he often gave up the reins of government, continued, both by intrigues and by the ſword, to labour at the extermination of the Proteſtants; and, like an evil ſpirit, ſtill ſcattered diſcord and death over the unhappy kingdom.

Among the numerous favourites of the king, ſtigmatized by the people with the name of "*les Mignons*," none was higher in favor, or ſeemed more likely to maintain it, than the young Marquis de Champignac. His birth was ſuperior to that of

* I ſhall never forget, ſays the Duke de Sulli. in his Memoirs, the fantaſtic and extravagant equipage in which I found this monarch in his cabinet. He had a ſword at his ſide, a Spaniſh ſilk hood hung down on his ſhoulders, a ſmall cap ſuch as collegians wear was upon his head, and a baſket full of *little dogs* hung by a ribband about his neck.

the

moſt of the paraſites who were diſgraced by the preference of their vicious maſter; and, added to a conſiderable ſhare of perſonal advantages, he poſſeſſed ſome of another ſort, that might have raiſed him to favor, in a different court from that of Henry the Third. For, without the leaſt ſenſe of honor or honeſty, he had talents for intrigue, was ſpecious, artful and eloquent. He thought nothing unworthy of him that adminiſtered either to his inſatiable avarice or his boundleſs ambition; and held an opinion, which unfortunately is ſince become too general, that he who is rich and powerful may ſet the cenſures of the world at defiance; and, diveſted of fear, which ſometimes ſtands in place of conſcience, may "dare do any thing becauſe he dares."

Catharine, the Queen Mother, was perfectly aware of the truth of the Machiavelian axiom—"Divide et impera." She uſed therefore the pretence of religion (to which ſhe was wholly indiffer-

ent herſelf*) to excite one part of the people of France againſt the other. In that age, fanaticiſm was the moſt powerful engine of ſtate. Perſecution produced its uſual effects; and, abhorring the treachery of their oppreſſors, and more and more convinced of the fallacy of tenets which could authoriſe ſuch crimes, and even teach the actors of them to glory in the deſtruction of their fellow-citizens, the Hugonots became more devoted to the cauſe of reform, and every man conſidered himſelf as a martyr, ready to give his life to promote or defend it.

On the other hand, the flaming zeal of the Catholics roſe in proportion to the difficulty they found in extirpating theſe obſtinate Hugonots, who had the

* When the Calviniſt army obtained a ſingular advantage, and it was likely their party would finally prevail, Catharine, on being told of it, anſwered with perfect compoſure—"Eh! bien, il faudra done prier Dieu en François."

ſacri-

ſacrilegious preſumption to deny the infallibility and ſovereign power of the Roman pontiff; and the wickedneſs to pretend to ſee with their own eyes, and uſe their own reaſon, contrary to his eſpecial mandates.

Among the court attendants, none, ſave the reverend eccleſiaſtics themſelves, expreſſed more zeal againſt theſe innovators than the young Marquis de Champignac. By the diſplay of this extraordinary fervour, he obtained ſuch favour with the King's confeſſor, and ſundry biſhops and clergy of that period, that though his moral conduct was more incorrect than even the general libertiniſm of that diſſolute court ſanctioned, his illuſtrious maſter was encouraged in his predilection for him by the praiſes of the monks and moſt auſtere of the religious men, to whom was entruſted the care of the royal conſcience; while to the Queen Mother, De Champignac appeared the moſt obſequious of her

ſervants, and ſhe found him eminently uſeful in influencing the mind of her ſon, when his wavering and trifling temper led him, as it ſometimes did, to think of meaſures contrary to her intereſt and approbation.

Thus qualified to riſe, and viſibly riſing, in the favour of both the mother and the ſon, the Marquis de Champignac was the man elected by Boiſdauphin for the huſband of Coriſande. The offer of ſuch an alliance, and ſo ſplendid a fortune as ſhe was likely to poſſeſs, was too dazzling to be refuſed; but De Champignac referred himſelf in the utmoſt humility to the King and Queen. Their majeſties highly approved of the propoſal, and ſent an order to Boiſdauphin to haſten the preparations, and complete the marriage between his niece and the Marquis as ſpeedily as poſſible.

That the heireſs of Beauvilliers could have a will of her own, never occurred to any of thoſe who thus undertook to diſpoſe

diſpoſe of her. An orphan, or even more unhappy than an orphan, in being loſt to her father while he was yet living, ſhe had no friend to ſupport her in any oppoſition. But nothing was ſo improbable as that ſhe ſhould make any; ſince, whatever were the precepts ſhe had learned from her Hugonot parents, ſhe had now been two years under the ſtricteſt diſcipline, and the ſin of her diſobedience inceſſantly puniſhed, under the direction of the Abbeſs and ladies of St. Francis.

From the care of that ſociety ſhe was, by the order of her maternal uncle, now removed, and found herſelf in nominal poſſeſſion of the Caſtle of Montrichard; yet, ignorant of the cauſe of this change, ſhe was ſtill in fact a priſoner, with no other real alteration, than that, inſtead of being a penſioner in a convent, ſhe was in the houſe which had belonged to her father, under the orders of ſome of the ſame perſons who had ſuperin-

tended her actions, and, as they believed, directed her ideas, in the monaſtery.

But if Coriſande had cheriſhed, during her reſidence there, the tendereſt remembrance of her parents, and the livelieſt recollection of all they had taught her, thoſe impreſſions were not likely to be effaced by returning to ſcenes which renewed every fond recollection of the days when ſhe was happy in their inſtruction and protection. There was not a room at Montrichard where their images were not ever preſent to her. She remembered but too well the fatal departure of her father, and ſtill felt his laſt embrace. She fell into an agony of grief in ſeeing again the room where her mother, ſtruggling to conceal the agonies of a breaking heart, had, in an inarticulate voice, conjured her to ſuſtain her courage, and aſſured her they ſhould meet again. The portraits of theſe parents, parents ſo juſtly dear to her, and thoſe of ſome other

other of her immediate anceſtors who had been followers of Calvin, ſhe found defaced and mutilated. The apartments were ſtripped of their moſt valuable moveables; and Coriſande, as ſhe traverſed the long galleries and ancient chambers of this once magnificent and hoſpitable edifice, fancied herſelf the heireſs only of deſolation and miſery.

All the domeſtics of her father had either periſhed under the hands of aſſaſſins as Hugonots, or had been driven away by fear, ſave a Swiſs porter, who being a relation of one of the monks of the neighbouring convent, and of a diſpoſition little inclined to contend about matters of which he underſtood nothing, had agreed to go to maſs rather than loſe his life, or even his place, and lately had remained unnoticed and undiſturbed.

On the return however of Coriſande, all the affection recurred to his mind that he had felt for his lord, her father, whom

whom he had followed from Switzerland when he paſſed through that country on his travels. He remembered all the generoſity and kindneſs of that excellent maſter, and began to wonder how it had happened that ſo many of his vaſſals had abandoned him, and, though he yet perhaps lived, had taken no means to ſhow him their gratitude. The ſight of his young and lovely daughter deeply affected this old ſervant. She noticed him with peculiar kindneſs, when ſhe learned that Donat Bienne was the only domeſtic remaining about the houſe who had ſerved her father; and Donat, when ſhe ſpoke, imagined he heard the voice of his deceaſed lady, from whom he had experienced ſo many acts of beneficence, and who had promoted his marriage with a little Frenchwoman, one of her inferior attendants, to whom ſhe had given money and furniture, and been godmother to their little girl.

Donat

Donat could not help contraſting in his mind that amiable lady with the haughty and repulſive manners of the perſon who ſoon, in conſequence of a new arrangement, appeared as miſtreſs of the Caſtle, at leaſt for a time, and who was in reality an indigent widow of rank, with whom Boiſdauphin had been long connected, and to whom he had entruſted the taſk of preparing Coriſande for the reception of the Marquis de Champignac. This woman was commiſſioned to diſmiſs the ladies of St. Francis; and, though a total ſtranger, to become the governeſs and directreſs of Coriſande. From her ſhe abruptly learned the intentions of her uncle; and underſtood with inexpreſſible aſtoniſhment and terror, that within a fortnight ſhe was to be affianced, and within two months married, to a man whom ſhe had never ſeen, and whoſe very name was till then unknown to her.

Young as Coriſande was, ſhe was

not ignorant that ſuch marriages were very frequent; but that ſhe was herſelf, at ſo early an age, to be the victim of her uncle's ambition, appeared the heavieſt misfortune that could befall her. The very means her new governeſs, La Baronne de St. Aulaire, took to perſuade her of the advantage of the brilliant fortune deſigned for her, ſerved only to excite her averſion; for it was from thence ſhe learned that the Marquis was one of the court favourites, a perſecutor of the Calviniſts, and particularly devoted to the Queen Mother, from whom, even from her earlieſt recollection, Coriſande had been taught that all the calamities of France had ariſen, calamities in which her own family had been ſo fatally involved.—The leſſons ſhe had received in the convent had ſo little anſwered the purpoſe for which they were given, that her diſguſt, though it was neceſſary to conceal it, had greatly increaſed. The

images

images of her mother, her ſiſter, and her infant brother, had never a moment been abſent from her thoughts; and her father, who had either periſhed as they had done, or lived in poverty and exile, ſeemed to be continually near her, exhorting her to remember him, and never to give the deſtroyers of his family a title to his property. Of the Marquis de Champignac, therefore, ſhe thought not merely with diſlike, but abhorrence. Yet knowing too well how little ſhe had to hope from remonſtrance or entreaty with the perſons in whoſe power ſhe was, ſhe tried to repreſs the utterance of ſentiments which tortured her heart; and to the elaborate diſcourſes of La Baronne de St. Aulaire ſhe anſwered only with coldneſs and indifference: but, when night releaſed her from thoſe painful converſations, ſhe looked around her for ſome means to eſcape from the miſery with which ſhe was threatened, and

which

which in ſo ſhort a time would become irremediable.

Preparations were already making at Montrichard for the reception of the Vidame de Boiſdauphin, and the young and ambitious bridegroom who was to be its future lord. All the damages occaſioned by plunder and neglect were repaired: new furniture of the moſt ſplendid kind, after the manner of thoſe times, was ſent from Paris; and ſo little doubt did the projectors of this union ſeem to entertain of its taking place, that in ſome of the rich arras the arms of de Champignac were interwoven in gold and colours with thoſe of Coriſande, as heireſs of the houſe of Beauvilliers; and his motto and device*, which were extremely oſtentatious, were diſplayed

* That which was afterwards taken by Fouquet, in the reign of Louis the 14th—a ſquirrel aſcending a pine tree, and the motto, "Quæ non aſcendem?"

on

on various parts of the ornaments. This was ſo far from being thought preſumptuous or extraordinary, that the Baroneſs de St. Aulaire took the trouble to explain the meaning of this ſentence, and occaſion from thence to begin a very elaborate eulogium on the merits and brilliant proſpects of this fortunate favourite of monarchs, and whom a monarch had named as the huſband of the ſtill more fortunate Coriſande de Beauvilliers.

Coriſande de Beauvilliers, however, was not dazzled by all theſe gaudy repreſentations; nor was ſhe perſuaded by the eloquence of the lady: but, in proportion as ſhe found theſe people were abſolutely reſolved to diſpoſe of her without one inquiry whether ſhe was or was not averſe to the man they had choſen, her determination to reject him gained ſtrength. Yet, how could ſhe eſcape the toils in which deſtiny had entangled her? Throughout the houſe, where

where once every one was humbly ſolicitous to ſerve her father, ſhe ſaw not one face that expreſſed compaſſion or affection for her. Nominally an heireſs, and miſtreſs of the domain, ſhe was in reality a ſlave; and under her preſent circumſtance ſhe was tempted to envy every peaſant girl whom ſhe heard ſinging at a diſtance among the vineyards, and aſſiſting the vignerons in their now commencing labours of the vintage.

Coriſande, even at ſo early an age, had ſomething like judgment: her mind was not indeed matured, but the impreſſions ſhe had received from her father's precepts were indelible; and, aided by an underſtanding naturally ſtrong and clear, theſe early leſſons had qualified her to reject the fables of ſuperſtition, and contend with the frippery of hypocritical ſophiſtry. Though yet a child in years, ſhe very properly conſidered, that, if ſhe was old enough

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to make an indiſſoluble engagement, and to pronounce vows the moſt ſolemn and binding that can be impoſed by ſocial laws, ſhe was certainly old enough to have a will of her own, and to act as that will directed. Coriſande therefore determined, that, if her father was living, (and it was known he was ſo not many months before, though a report had ſince obtained of his death,) *he* alone was the arbiter of her fate. If he was indeed no more, ſhe was reſolved that no power, however tremendous it might be repreſented, ſhould dictate to *her*, into whoſe hands ſhe ſhould give the patrimony ſhe had inherited by ſo many loſſes, together with her freedom and herſelf.

To expreſs theſe ſentiments, however, according to the natural openneſs of her temper, would, ſhe knew, be to hazard every chance of acting as they dictated. Madame de St. Aulaire had not the remoteſt ſuſpicion that ſuch a mere

mere child could have any opinion or choice. She had other affairs to attend to, for ſhe was decidedly a woman of intrigue; and nothing doubting but that Coriſande was juſt ſuch a girl as twenty other girls who had been married without being conſulted, and ſuch as *ſhe* was at that age herſelf, ſhe ſaw no neceſſity for particular vigilance. Coriſande was therefore, during many hours of the day, ſuffered to amuſe herſelf as ſhe would; the Baroneſs little imagining, that, far from enjoying the idea of her future conſequence, and gazing with childiſh delight on the fineries of which ſhe was to be miſtreſs, the objects that occupied the time and thoughts of Coriſande were, how ſhe ſhould communicate to her father, if he was yet alive, if not, to her father's friends, her preſent ſituation, and how ſhe might eſcape from it.

Hardly a fortnight remained to make attempts, in the ſucceſs or failure of which

which her happineſs or miſery was ſo deeply involved. Hour after hour the almoſt deſpairing Coriſande wandered over the Caſtle of her anceſtors, wiſhing rather that its ancient battlements might fall upon and cruſh her, than that ſhe ſhould there be compelled to enter into engagements from which her ſoul recoiled. Hour after hour ſhe ſat at one of the great windows, and, watching the autumnal clouds, and fancying they ſailed towards the weſtern coaſt of France, indulged the day dream that told her, her father might mark thoſe very clouds, unconſcious that they had paſſed over the head of his miſerable and deſolate daughter.

It was not however in the nature of Coriſande, to waſte that time in feeble and fruitleſs repining which might with any hope of ſucceſs be dedicated to action. Her thoughts inceſſantly in ſearch of the means of either hearing of the fate of the Count de Beauvilliers, and

and of putting herſelf, if he yet was alive, under his protection, ſhe at length recollected Donat Bienne, who alone remained of her father's former ſervants. The manners and look of this man, in the few times ſhe had had occaſion to ſee him, ſeemed to be altogether unlike thoſe of the people who had been placed here by the Vidame de Boiſdauphin. He did not reſide in the Caſtle, but in a lodge without the laſt foſſé; for it was regularly and ſtrongly fortified, as all houſes of noblemen were at that period in France. Coriſande determined to ſpeak to this man; and that her going without the walls might not appear ſudden or ſingular, ſhe accuſtomed herſelf for ſome days to walk into the avenues of high trees which on three ſides ſurrounded it. At laſt an opportunity occurred of entering the lodge where Donat reſided. She began a converſation with his wife, to whom ſhe made ſome trifling preſent; careſſed

reſſed his children, and inſenſibly drew him into talking of paſt times.

"Every thing you do, Madam," ſaid he, "every thing you ſay, puts me in mind of my lady, the Counteſs:—bleſſed be her ſoul! But ſhe *is* bleſſed—ſhe is in heaven. God grant, dear young lady, that you may be as happy with the fine young Lord they are going to give us for a maſter, as ſhe was with our late Seigneur, your father! For, never were better people; nor, bating the loſs of their little ones, that died three or four of them quite in their cradle, never, I think, were people happier; and would have been to this hour, if it had not been for———But what ſignifies making lamentation over the paſt?—What is, is—and——"

Donat was proceeding in this ſtyle, when Coriſande, ſummoning all her reſolution, aſked him if he would convince her that the memory of his former Lord and Lady were dear to him, by

trying to obtain for her ſome information of her father?

The wife of Donat was out of the room at this moment, or Coriſande would not have hazarded the queſtion, having heard that her influence over her huſband had prevented his acting as others had done who were of the Calviniſt perſuaſion. The woman returned ſo immediately, that Donat could not reply: but Coriſande thought ſhe underſtood the meaning of his looks; and, leaving the lodge to walk in the avenue of lime trees, he followed her.

It was then that, putting every hope to the hazard, Coriſande declared to this old ſervant her utter averſion to the marriage that was intended, and her determination to ſubmit to every inconvenience rather than ſuffer it to be concluded. The native good ſenſe of the man to whom ſhe ſpoke, made him perceive that the perſons who aſſumed the power of diſpoſing of her could have

have no right to do ſo, founded in either reaſon or nature. He believed the Count himſelf to be ſtill alive; and though he had, partly through fear of the violence exerciſed towards Hugonots, and partly from a deſire to live in peace with his wife, ſubmitted to diſſimulate, that he might continue in his humble home; his heart, naturally upright, continually reproached him with dereliction of his benefactor, and ingratitude unworthy of one who called himſelf an honeſt man.

Every ſentiment which for quietneſs ſake he had ſtudied to lull aſleep was arouſed by this direct application. The conſequences were no longer preſent to him, and he eagerly inquired what he could do to prove his zeal and attachment.

"I would aſk you, my good Donat, to make yourſelf inquiries as to my father; but my ſpirits ſhrink in dread from the knowledge, that a few days

only will decide my fate. Oh! if he does but live—if I could but be ſure of it, I would fly to him—I would take ſhelter with him againſt this cruel oppreſſion—I would joyfully ſhare the humbleſt fortune." A ſudden thought then occurred to her. "Donat," cried ſhe, after a moment's pauſe, "would it be impoſſible for me to reach Rochelle, where there is every reaſon to believe my father, if he yet lives, is now ſhut up? Could you not find me a dreſs—the dreſs of a peaſant boy perhaps would be the moſt ſecure—in which I could eſcape from this priſon, where I am ſo ſoon to be forced into the power of a man I do not know and cannot love?" Donat heſitated, and ſeemed to tremble at ſo hazardous an experiment. Coriſande read his thoughts, and ſaid, "Fear nothing for yourſelf, my friend; it never ſhall be known how I obtained the means of elopement. I do not aſk you to accompany me in my flight; I would not

not riſk your ſafety, or injure you in your ſituation. I will take nothing with me but a few trifles of my mother's. It is my fortune theſe people want; and if they find themſelves poſſeſſed of that, they will be glad to believe I am loſt to the world for ever. *Why*, ſince I am willing to reſign that to them, ſhould *I* be perſonally their victim?—Donat," added ſhe with increaſed ſpirit, "*I never will*:—ſuch is my abhorrence of the Marquis de Champignac, and ſo firm my determination never to be in his power, that I *will* eſcape from it, even though the grave be the only alternative. Decide therefore at once. Will you ſerve me?—The time *may* come when your ancient maſter may aſſiſt me to ſhow my gratitude."

Donat was awed by the reſolute manner of a perſon ſo young; and conſidering that what ſhe required might be executed without the knowledge of his wife, and with no hazard to himſelf, promiſed to

ſet about it immediately. There certainly was no time to be loſt, as Coriſande had been informed that, before the end of the week, Meſſieurs de Boiſdauphin and De Champignac were to arrive.

But Donat had hardly given this promiſe before he repented of it; not on his own account, but from the dangers which a little reflection made him perceive his young lady would be liable to in the execution of her ſcheme. How could a perſon ſo young, ſo little accuſtomed to fatigue, undertake a journey of above thirty leagues, through a country the ſeat of civil war, and crowded with ſoldiers of two parties, from either of whom ſhe would be in almoſt equal danger, whatever appearance ſhe might aſſume? The Swiſs conſidered the project and his promiſe with diſmay; but ſtill the opinions which he had adopted at the earlieſt period of his life, his ſecret though undeclared

undeclared abhorrence of the Queen Mother, and his wiſh to ſerve and oblige Coriſande, combined to perſuade him that he ought to procure her the means of flying from her priſon and her perſecutors.

It was not difficult for him to provide at a neighbouring town the dreſs of a peaſant boy; and the next evening after their converſation, Coriſande found herſelf ſupplied with all that was neceſſary for her diſguiſe. Her reſolution was redoubled, inſtead of failing, as the hour approached when ſhe hoped to eſcape; and it coſt her no effort to refuſe the offer Donat made of accompanying her, being well aſſured that the poor fellow, whoſe zeal was greater than his courage, dared not riſk the anger of his wife, and that, far from his attendance ſecuring her ſafety, it would have directed the purſuit: all, therefore, ſhe required of him beyond the ſervice

he had already done her was, to ſecure her leaving the Caſtle without moleſtation; and that he happily effected.

Coriſande, a little pacquet tied to a walking-ſtick on her ſhoulder, and equipped like the ſon of a vigneron, or labourer, found herſelf alone at an hour of the evening when ſhe had never been out before, unleſs protected by the retinue which at that period attended the families of noblemen; and, looking behind her, the Caſtle was no longer viſible, and the footſteps of Donat no longer heard. All the dread with which the Marquis de Champignac and her uncle inſpired her on one hand, and, on the other, that ardent deſire ſhe had to find her father, were hardly ſufficient to ſupport her courage. Proceeding, however, unmoleſted on the road, or rather path Donat had directed her, ſhe hoped to reach before night-fall a houſe where he told her a woman lived, who,

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on believing ſhe came from him, and was the ſon of ſome neighbouring peaſant whom he had ſent on a meſſage to Amboiſe, would not only receive her for the night, but ſend a boy to conduct her on her way the next day to another perſon, a countryman of his, for whom he gave Coriſande a letter, deſiring him to aſſiſt the lad who would deliver it with the means of paſſing ſafely to Amboiſe.

But, of attaining the firſt aſylum, the luckleſs Coriſande was unhappily diſappointed: either the directions given by Donat were not clear, or ſhe miſunderſtood them; ſo that, inſtead of taking a path which cut acroſs the corner of a wood, and would have brought her to an obſcure hamlet, at hardly a league and a half from Montrichard, ſhe found herſelf wandering further and further into an extenſive foreſt, which, like many of thoſe then in France, over-

ſhadowed twenty leagues of country. Coriſande, ſoon bewildered among the darkening boughs, would have returned by the path through which ſhe entered it; but her attempt to do ſo ſerved only to lead her into another quarter of this extenſive woodland.

The apprehenſion of wolves, and of bears, which infeſted theſe great woods; the dread of parties of ſoldiers, who, often diſperſing in diſcontent for want of pay, lurked about, and ſubſiſted on plunder, were almoſt equally terrific to the imagination of Coriſande. She felt at once the danger and the impoſſibility of avoiding it; but, of a peculiar and ſtrong character, this very young woman poſſeſſed, even at that moment, the power of comparing the long-continued wretchedneſs which awaited her ſhould ſhe return, (admitting that to return was ſtill in her power), with the tranſient ſuffering of periſhing by the

ferocious animals of the deſert; and ſhe was able to decide, that to die would be the leaſt evil of the two.

The idea of falling into the hands of men who lived on rapine, was, however, infinitely painful. Yet, ſhe appeared like a village boy of eleven or twelve years old; and ſuch an appearance was, even at that half-civilized period, a protection. Though autumn was already far advanced, yet in the ſouthern provinces of France there is little to apprehend from the inclemency of the weather, and even at that ſeaſon of the year, there are none of thoſe heavy dews which fall in the more northern countries. Coriſande, therefore, quite exhauſted by the hopeleſs attempt to find her way out of the wood, ſat down on the high moſs-clad roots of an old beech, which formed a kind of ſeat: but, too uneaſy to ſleep, ſhe could only recline her weary limbs againſt the bole of the tree, and, recommending herſelf

to the protection of Heaven, determined o wait with as much patience and reſolution as ſhe could the dawn of day.

It was not yet quite dark where the trees were not thick, and where many had loſt their leaves, and the night was perfectly calm; ſcarce a leaf trembled in the light air, and neither man nor beaſt ſeemed to be abroad.

Soothed by this tranquil pauſe, Coriſande recovered her breath and ſpirits: leaning her head on her hands, her arms ſupported by her knees, ſhe looked ſteadily forward, and, after awhile, imagined ſhe perceived that there were only a few trees between her and a more open ſpace, and that perhaps ſhe was already on the outſkirts of the wood. She ſprang forward in this hope, and found herſelf in an almoſt circular glade; for theſe extenſive foreſts ſerved higher ranks of men as hunting-grounds, and in many of them avenues and receſſes were cut, for the purpoſe of purſuing

and

ſhooting the wild boars, foxes, and wolves. Such a place, and where her father himſelf had often pitched his tent and directed his vaſſals to aſſemble, was that, on the long coarſe graſs of which Coriſande now trod. But ſhe immediately perceived what it was, and that ſtill the trees every way ſurrounded her. She was about to retreat again to her moſſy ſeat, when her eyes were attracted by an object, which appeared to move on the oppoſite ſide of the lawn. Alarmed, though without any conjecture as to what this object was, ſhe continued to gaze on it. Sometimes it appeared ſtationary, and again ſeemed to change its poſition, and even to approach her. Coriſande retired among the trees, but, as if faſcinated, could not remove her eyes from this ſingular appearance. At length ſhe thought it reſembled a human being; and then, as ſlowly the figure approached acroſs the open ſpace, her doubts were removed

removed by certainty; and from the height and dreſs, as it appeared through the doubtful gloom, ſhe believed it to be either a woman or a prieſt, and her fears in ſome degree abated.

But, to whatever deſcription of perſons this myſterious appearance belonged, Coriſande had very little inclination to become to him or her an object of notice. She crept back, therefore, ſlowly among the trees, but ſtill without loſing ſight of the object of her apprehenſion, which had now croſſed the glade, and, coming directly towards the place where ſhe was concealed, took poſſeſſion of the ſeat, formed by the groteſque roots of the old beech tree, where Coriſande had juſt before repoſed. She now diſtinguiſhed a tall woman, not in a peaſant's dreſs—but that was all the increaſing gloom allowed her to aſcertain. That ſuch a perſon ſhould, like herſelf, be wandering alone in ſuch a place, and at ſuch an hour, ſeemed very

very ſtrange. Many conjectures paſſed through the mind of Coriſande; but ſhe was too little acquainted with the cuſtoms of the world to form any that could ſatisfactorily account for ſo ſingular a circumſtance; and fear being ſtill the predominant ſenſation ſhe felt, to effect a further retreat as quietly as ſhe could was what appeared moſt prudent.

To do this, however, amid the perfect ſtillneſs of the night, and ſo near a perſon as watchful as herſelf, was not very eaſy; and, no ſooner had ſhe cautiouſly ſtepped on among the fallen leaves a few paces, before the perſon aroſe, and, looking around her, called, in a low voice — "Guiſcarde, Guiſcarde!" — Coriſande did not anſwer; but the ſtranger had already caught a glimpſe between the trees of the white *fraiſe* ſhe wore, and which made at that time a part even of a peaſant's dreſs; and with a degree of haſte that ſeemed

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to ariſe partly from fear, this unknown perſon came up to the terrified Coriſande. "Who are you?" ſaid ſhe. "I expect ſome of my people here. What are you waiting for? and to whom do you belong?"

The tone and manner in which theſe words were delivered, increaſed the aſtoniſhment of Coriſande, while her apprehenſions, however, were relieved. She collected, courage, therefore to anſwer according to the leſſon ſhe had received from Donat: "I am," ſaid ſhe, "the ſon of a peaſant belonging to the domain of Montrichard; and being ſent on a meſſage to Amboiſe, I have loſt my way in the foreſt, where I muſt wait till morning, for I have tried in vain to regain it."

The voice of Coriſande convinced her to whom ſhe ſpoke, that it was that of a very young perſon; but it ſeemed at the ſame moment that her language was not that of a peaſant boy.—"Have you

you ſeen any one paſs this wood," inquired the ſtranger, "before you met me?" Coriſande anſwered in the negative. "How far," ſaid the former, "is it from hence to Montrichard? If you are a peaſant of that neighbourhood, perhaps you could conduct me thither?"

Coriſande trembled at this inquiry, and knew not what to reply. "There is no perſon at the Caſtle of Montrichard to receive you, Madam," ſaid ſhe: for, by the air of authority ſhe aſſumed, there could be no doubt but this night wanderer was a perſon of ſome conſequence. "I know it well," replied the lady: "had it been otherwiſe, I ſhould have felt no inclination to go to it. Your meſſage can be delayed: I will reward you for your trouble: conduct me thither."

Coriſande recoiled in terror from the taſk that was thus required of her;—and who was the extraordinary being who,

who, with ſo commanding an air, thought herſelf authorized to demand it?

Coriſande had been uſed herſelf to command, and ſhe felt a ſingular and by no means a pleaſant ſenſation in being thus conſidered as one whoſe buſineſs it was to obey. Half forgetting the aſſumed character, which ſhe had not ſufficiently ſtudied, inſtead of expreſſing any degree of readineſs to do as ſhe was directed, Coriſande ſaid, "May I aſk *who* it is that requires this ſervice of me? I have no right to introduce any one to the Caſtle of Montrichard: if I had, it could not be one of whom I know nothing, and whom I meet under ſingular circumſtances."

"You aſk," replied the ſtranger in a firm yet altered tone of voice, "who it is that requires of you this ſervice—Know then, that you ſpeak to Margaret de Valois, Princeſs of France, and Queen of Navarre."

"To Margaret of Valois!" repeated Coriſande;

Coriſande; "to the Queen of Navarre! Is it really poſſible?"

"Are you yourſelf what you ſeem to be?" ſaid the Queen: "I ſuſpect that you are *not* a peaſant boy. It is material to me to know what you are: by concealing the truth you will injure yourſelf, but you cannot deceive me."

Coriſande had heard of this Princeſs, chiefly as having been married againſt her inclination to the King of Navarre—as being warmly attached to the Catholic religion, yet of ſo generous and humane a temper, that ſhe had protected ſeveral Hugonots whom her mother and her brothers had doomed to deſtruction. She reſolved at once to truſt her with the truth of her own ſituation; and, without giving herſelf time to conſider the conſequences, declared, in a few reſpectful words, who ſhe was, and why ſhe had left, in ſuch a diſguiſe, the abode of her anceſtors,

ceſtors, of which ſhe was nominally the miſtreſs; adding, that, in the perſuaſion her father was yet living, ſhe had determined to attempt reaching Rochelle in order to put herſelf into his protection.

Margaret, however, with all her perſonal errors, and though her underſtanding was occaſionally obſcured by fanaticiſm and her integrity warped, by Italian politics, had really an elevated mind, and a generous heart. She was charmed with that ſpirit and reſolution in a perſon ſo young; at a more advanced age, ſhe had exerted herſelf in vain to avoid a marriage ſhe deteſted; and, in addition to the favourable impreſſion this circumſtance gave her of the character of Coriſande, ſhe became immediately intereſted in her favour, on learning that it was the Marquis de Champignac from whom ſhe was flying. Among all thoſe of her brother's

brother's unworthy favourites, who had at different times diſguſted and offended her, there was none ſo obnoxious to her as he was; and it was owing to ſome new diſſenſion between her and the King her brother, which De Champignac had fomented, that ſhe was at this time endeavouring to conceal herſelf at a diſtance from Paris. This coincidence determined her at once to eſpouſe the cauſe of the young wanderer, and, however unprotected and deſtitute herſelf at that moment, to take under her care one who was, like her, perſecuted and oppreſſed.

* However amiable the character of Henry of Navarre, afterwards Henry the Fourth of France, (and the firſt King of the Houſe of Bourbon) and however pleaſing his perſon might be to others, Margaret had a decided diſlike to him; and it is but candid to believe, that many of the irregularities of her life aroſe from being compelled to marry him, while her heart was devoted to the Duke of Guiſe.

Whoever

Whoever has read the various hiſtories in which mention is made of this extraordinary woman, will not heſitate to ſay, that none of the evils Coriſande was likely to encounter, was, in its probable conſequences, more to be dreaded than this ſtrange meeting. But Coriſande herſelf, to whom the real character of the Queen was not known, and who had never comtemplated her but by ſuch mediums as the Great in every age are ſeen through, felt herſelf at once relieved from all her apprehenſions. Whatever tranſient eſtrangement there might be between the various members of the royal family, Coriſande imagined, that to be protected by one of them was ſufficient to ſecure her from any conſtraint that her uncle wiſhed to put upon her; and ſhe profeſſed, with all the native eloquence and warmth of her character, the livelieſt gratitude for the generous intentions of the Queen, and the joy ſhe ſhould feel in being

conſidered

conſidered as worthy her majeſty's notice. Total darkneſs, however, ſurrounded them while they were thus in converſation. The attendant whom the Queen expected came not; and every intention of ſeeking the ſhelter of Montrichard being given up, not only as impoſſible to be accompliſhed that night, but as likely to be fatal to them both, it became time to conſider whether they ſhould paſs the night where they were, or make an attempt to ſeek a proper aſylum. Margaret ſeemed to find great comfort, even in having ſome one to hear her while ſhe expreſſed her uneaſineſs and anxiety that Guiſcarde did not appear. "What can have happened to him?" ſaid ſhe; "and wherefore is it that he does not keep his appointment? He could hardly miſs the place to which he himſelf conducted me ſo few hours ſince, while he went to fetch one of my women, who was to join me at Arnibelle, where I had waited

waited for her till my ſtay was no longer ſafe there. What can poſſibly have become of her and of Guiſcarde?" Coriſande underſtood that Guiſcarde was a page, to whom alone ſhe had entruſted the ſecret of her intended flight; and the increaſing ſolicitude with which ſhe ſpoke of him as the time wore away, appeared to Coriſande to be a proof of that ſenſibility and goodneſs of heart for which ſhe had heard the Queen of Navarre ſo honoured and praiſed.

Encouraged by having ſo illuſtrious a companion in her misfortunes, the preſent inconvenience of paſſing the night, according to the French phraſe, *à la belle étoile*, was a matter of little concern to Coriſande; but towards what was to happen on the morrow ſhe did not look with ſo much tranquillity. It was poſſible that, whatever were the ſentiments of the Queen, her attendants, from whom ſhe was now ſeparated only by accident or miſtake, might be connected

nected either with De Champignac or with her uncle; and, if her diſguiſe was underſtood, it was but too likely that ſhe might be betrayed into their power. This was not, however, a time to ſpeak of fears and doubts to this new protectreſs; it was more neceſſary to endeavour to conciliate her favour, as the beſt defence againſt whatever might be attempted by the parties ſhe had reaſon to fear.

Margaret ſoon forgot every immediate cauſe of alarm, and every inconvenience ſhe experienced, ſave only what aroſe from her ſolicitude about her page. "Guiſcarde, Guiſcarde," was ſtill repeated, with a degree of intereſt and anxiety likely to perſuade Coriſande, that ſhe, who in ſo exalted a rank could ſo warmly and generouſly feel for one of her pages, muſt certainly be the kindeſt and moſt conſiderate miſtreſs in the world.

This obſervation, and ſome others

that ſhe made in the courſe of the converſation, at length encouraged Coriſande to ſpeak of her apprehenſions, and to entreat of the Queen that ſhe might paſs for a village boy, whom her majeſty had retained as a menial ſervant. The day by this time dawned, and Margaret had an opportunity of diſtinguiſhing the form and features of the young wanderer, with which ſhe ſeemed extremely ſtruck. "A menial ſervant!" ſaid ſhe, ſmiling archly: "my dear girl, whoever ſees you will eaſily detect the fallacy of ſuch an aſſertion. No, Coriſande: if to be known as a woman will be attended with all the danger you foreſee, you muſt paſs at preſent for my page. I know not how Guiſcarde will like ſuch an aſſociate; but certainly La Moue and Phillipine cannot object to you. I ſhall only be afraid for the hearts of thoſe poor girls."

Coriſande was unuſed to be ſpoken to by any but domeſtics, who, except her

her own maid, had ſeldom preſumed to hint to her the perſonal advantages ſhe ſo eminently poſſeſſed, and the language ſhe now heard aſtoniſhed and confuſed her. But her illuſtrious companion, as the morning advanced, ſpoke in renewed alarm of the continued abſence of Guiſcarde. "Whither," ſaid ſhe, "can he be gone? What accident can have detained him? I can hardly believe he loſt his way, ſince he aſſured me that, having from his infancy been accuſtomed to hunt in theſe woods, he knew every avenue and lawn throughout their whole extent." Chagrin and anxiety then obſcured the extraordinary beauty of a countenance, which, though want of reſt and fatigue muſt have diminiſhed ſome of its attractions, appeared to Coriſande to be almoſt ſuperhuman.

The Queen began to conſult with her young protegée as to their proceedings. "Whither can we go?" ſaid ſhe; "and

where are we ſecure? In quitting this concealment, even if hunger would permit us to ſtay in it, ſhall we not be liable to meet thoſe whom we moſt wiſh to avoid? And if after we are gone Guiſcarde comes, as he promiſed, to conduct me to a place where La Moue and Phillipine are attending till I appear, he will never find me; and, perhaps———Hark! was not that the cry of a hound? Did I not hear the voice of a hunter?—Holy ſaints! it may be Guiſcarde, or it may be his greateſt enemy———"

Coriſande liſtened to theſe and other ſuch exclamations with mingled wonder and fear; and, as ſhe beheld the tall majeſtic figure of the Queen moving with ſo much grace in this wild wood, (for they now traverſed the glade together) ſhe could hardly help imagining that the whole ſcene was a dream; and ſhe retraced all that had happened to occaſion her leaving Montrichard, to convince

convince herſelf ſhe was awake and in her ſenſes. Both her royal companion and herſelf became, however, more and more uneaſy as noon approached; and the faintneſs of hunger was added to the dread of being found by ſome of the perſons whom they both deſired to avoid. The hunters had certainly been heard more than once; and now again the horn and the noiſe of cheering the hounds were repeated by the echos. Every moment the two wanderers expected to ſee the hunters, or their attendants; and, though theſe men might not know them, the Queen was ſure her appearance would excite curioſity, which would probably lead to a diſcovery: yet, to retreat among the thicker ſhades would be uſeleſs; for thoſe deep receſſes were probably the reſort of the game of which the ſportſmen were in ſearch.

After two or three ſhort and disjointed conſultations, they determined to take

their chance of eſcaping from this wilderneſs of boughs, by purſuing the moſt obvious path in the contrary direction to that part of the wood where they heard theſe voices, and, if they were once diſentangled from among the trees, to aſk their way to Amboiſe. They were neither of them deſtitute of money; and Margaret had imagined a ſtory by which ſhe ſuppoſed ſhe might unqueſtioned obtain refreſhments at ſome obſcure hamlet, where the ignorant peaſants would form no idea of her rank, and that ſhe could from them procure a better diſguiſe; for the dreſs ſhe now wore, though not ſumptuous, was very unſuitable to the character of a pilgrim, which ſhe intended to aſſume; while Coriſande was to paſs as a young brother of hers, whom her parents had ſent to accompany her in her pious journey. Amidſt all the doubts ſhe entertained of her ſafety, and the fatigue and hardſhip ſhe was already expoſed

to,

to, the Queen, as Coriſande thought, felt ſomething like pleaſure in the propoſed metamorphoſis, which was to reduce her for a while to a level with the humbleſt of her brother's ſubjects, and ſhow her how thoſe lived from whom her rank had placed her at an immeaſurable diſtance.

Guiſcarde, however, amidſt all theſe projects was never for a moment forgotten; and various were the conjectures with which Margaret amuſed, or rather agitated, her mind, as ſlowly they proceeded. The deſultory dialogue, or monologue, thus carried on, as the Queen either diſcuſſed with Coriſande, or murmured to herſelf, her fears for the ſafety of her page, was ſuddenly interrupted by the appearance of ſeveral chaſſeurs, who broke through the thickeſt of the wood, and, eager in purſuit of their game, paſſed on. But theſe were preſently followed by the nobleman to whom they belonged. He

was paſſing as rapidly as the reſt; when perceiving Margaret, who could not eſcape from his obſervation, he ſtopped, and, approaching her with an air which left no doubt of her being known, inquired in an accent of wonder, yet with every appearance of reſpect, what could have brought her majeſty at ſuch a time, without attendants, to that place?

Margaret recovered inſtantly from her confuſion, on perceiving that the perſon who ſpoke was the Baron d'Herault, one of her friends. She gave him her hand, as an order to riſe from the half-kneeling poſture into which he had thrown himſelf, and with mingled dignity and good humour ſaid—"Have you been ſo long then from Fontainebleau that you are aſtoniſhed at meeting me at a diſtance from it?"

Coriſande did not hear the anſwer; for the Baron, giving his horſe to one of the men in attendance, walked reſpectfully,

reſpectfully, and with his hunting-cap in his hand, by the ſide of the Queen, who continued to ſpeak to him in a low voice. After a little time, during which the Baron ſeemed to be humbly remonſtrating, or rather entreating, Margaret appeared to have taken her reſolution; and, turning to Coriſande, "Seraphin," ſaid ſhe, "I am going to Chateau-brienne—do you follow me."

Coriſande dared not oppoſe this reſolution, however fatal it might eventually prove to herſelf. Two horſes were brought. Margaret reſolutely mounted one of them, and Coriſande, however awkwardly, contrived to place herſelf on the other; and, attended by ſeveral of the hunters whom their lord had ſummoned, they were ſoon out of the wood, and the Baron d'Herault leading the way conducted them to his houſe.

The peaſant boy, whom Margaret had repreſented as one ſhe had met with

in a village and taken to attend upon her, failed not to excite ſome curioſity.

The Baron had at firſt imagined this was ſome new favourite; for the Queen's gallantries were well known, nor did ſhe take much pains to conceal them: but there was ſomething in the manner of her ſpeaking of her page, that afterwards made him think he was miſtaken; and when he looked at Coriſande, he was ſtruck with the extreme delicacy of her features and complexion. He obſerved her hands, and could not for a moment believe they were thoſe of a young peaſant. A conjecture inſtantly offered itſelf to his imagination—It was a woman, one probably whoſe beauty had attracted the notice of le beau Guiſcarde, a very handſome youth, who had been for ſome time beloved by the Queen, and ſhe was conducting this dangerous rival from the ſight of her favoured lover.

Yet, on reflection, this did not appear very

very probable. There were many ways in the power of the Queen by which this might have been done with more eaſe and ſecurity; and when Margaret began to relate her uneaſineſs at Guiſcarde's not having overtaken her the preceding night at the rendezvous he had himſelf pointed out, and within a ſhort diſtance of which he had left her, the Baron d'Herault was convinced, that though he had not miſtaken the ſex of Seraphin, he had not diſcovered the reaſon why ſo lovely a young creature ſhould in ſuch a diſguiſe be wandering in the woods with the Queen of Navarre.

Coriſande now entered the offices of Chateau-brienne, crowded with domeſtics—ſome eagerly telling the extraordinary adventure that had concluded their day's hunting, others hurrying to obey the orders their lord had given for the reception of his illuſtrious gueſt. She ſat down in one of the

paſſage rooms, nearly overcome with fatigue--yet not daring to complain, and not being likely to obtain attention if ſhe had. The place where ſhe now was, ſhe believed to be very near Montrichard; and as ſhe muſt long ſince have been miſſed, it was probable a ſearch would be made, and ſhe ſhould be immediately diſcovered: nor was her dread of that event much leſs than that ſhe felt of inſult in the ſituation where ſhe now found herſelf. The Queen had already, ſhe feared, forgotten her: how indeed was it probable that by ſuch a perſon ſhe ſhould be remembered? In what a light then muſt ſhe appear, and to what diſagreeable and even diſgraceful converſation might ſhe not be expoſed!

Such were the diſtreſſing thoughts which occupied the mind of Coriſande, while her perſonal ſufferings from want of reſt and food were almoſt inſupportable,

able, when a decent oldiſh woman-ſervant approached, and, looking at her a moment with an expreſſion of wonder, requeſted her to come to a more proper place.

Coriſande willingly obeyed. Her conductreſs led her to a handſome room, near part of the houſe which ſhe told her was inhabited by the female domeſtics of the family; and, giving her to underſtand that ſhe was known to be a young woman, ſaid ſhe had orders from her lord to treat her in every reſpect as a *demoiſelle*. The woman then went away to fetch ſome refreſhments, which Coriſande confeſſed ſhe needed even to fainting; and having appeaſed her hunger, ſhe was glad to follow the advice of her attendant, and retire to a good bed, where, in deſpite of the ſingularity of her ſituation, and of all her anxieties, ſleep very ſoon befriended her.

WITH

WITH the morning returned the conſciouſneſs of her ſingular and perilous ſituation. She had no means of judging what would be the conduct of the royal and extraordinary perſonage, into whoſe protection and power ſhe had fallen in ſo ſtrange a manner. The motives of the Queen of Navarre for her own diſappearance from court were wholly unknown to Coriſande; yet an intuitive ſenſe of propriety induced her to fear that ſomething muſt be wrong when a woman of her rank appeared in a ſituation ſo unuſual, and expoſed herſelf to meet ſuch adventures as that which had occurred the preceding morning, when, through all the ſemblance of profound reſpect which the Baron d'Herault aſſumed, Coriſande imagined ſhe recollected a manner, a peculiar look, which, however difficult to deſcribe, was, ſhe thought, inconſiſtent with the deference and awe he ought

ought to feel towards the ſiſter of his King.

As there was no doubt but that her ſex was known, though her name might be concealed, Coriſande felt an invincible repugnance to putting on again the diſguiſe with which ſhe had eſcaped from Montrichard; yet there was no alternative, and her only hope was, that ſhe might be permitted to remain unnoticed in the chamber where ſhe had paſſed the night.

The Queen of Navarre, however, was not unmindful of her young charge; and though the Baron d'Herault was not a married man, it was not found difficult in his houſe to equip Coriſande in a complete habit fit for her; which was, at an early hour of the morning, brought to her by the ſame woman who had attended her the night before, together with a requeſt that ſhe would come down to the room where Margaret was.

Coriſande, as ſoon as ſhe was dreſſed, obeyed

obeyed this order with fear and trembling, yet not doubting but that ſhe ſhould find the Queen alone. On being ſhown, however, into the ante-room, ſhe found it crowded with pages and gentlemen in waiting, belonging to the Baron, whoſe looks, expreſſive of curioſity, and, ſhe thought, of licentiouſneſs, covered her with bluſhes. But, one of them ſtepping forward and opening a door, ſhe found herſelf in the preſence of the Queen and three or four noblemen, whoſe eyes were immediately fixed on her, while the protectreſs ſo recently acquired looked at her without ſpeaking, and with an air of doubt whether the young woman before her was the ruſtic page of the preceding day. Margaret was too good a judge of expreſſion, not to ſee that the beauty of Coriſande ſtruck every one preſent: but, little as ſhe had been accuſtomed to ſee, in *her* preſence, the charms of another ſo unequivocally acknowledged, ſhe was too

too generous to feel on this account any abatement of her kindneſs. Indeed, it happened, that, among the perſons who ſurrounded her, there was not one whoſe admiration Margaret had at that moment any deſign to engage.

The ſituation however of Coriſande was extremely uneaſy; for, though the Queen at length ſpoke kindly to her, and inquired, with an appearance of intereſt, how ſhe found herſelf after her fatigue; the very queſtion, while ſo many eyes were fixed on her, was extremely diſtreſſing. She knew little of the etiquette of Courts; but ſhe comprehended, by the air and manner of thoſe about her, that, the Queen's rank and her own being here perfectly underſtood, ſhe was no longer to be conſidered otherwiſe than as among her majeſty's ſervants; as one who was not to take a ſeat in her preſence; though, from the little ſhe ſaid, it ſeemed as if Coriſande was ſtill to remain in her protection.

To

To her, who had always been accuſtomed to receive from her own ſervants as much reſpect as it was now her turn to pay, (for, except during her ſtay with the ladies of St. Francis, ſhe had received from every body around her only attention and homage,) ſuch feelings were very awkward; leſs however from the novelty of the preſent ſcene, than from her doubts how her painful ſuſpenſe was to end.

Retired from the preſence of the Queen, many diſtreſſing ſenſations crowded on her mind: it was impoſſible for a moment to ſuppoſe, that, her flight from Montrichard being known, ſhe ſhould long be left unmoleſted by her uncle. The Queen Mother, who had ſhown ſo much ſolicitude for her marriage with De Champignac, would hardly deſiſt from enforcing her commands, at the inſtance of Queen Margaret, with whom ſhe was at variance; nor was it indeed very probable that Margaret would

would give herſelf much trouble on behalf of a young perſon whom accident only had thrown in her way, and for whom ſhe could have no particular predilection. The little conſequence her majeſty ſeemed to attach to the ſecret of her flight and diſguiſe, Coriſande thought was a proof that ſhe had nothing to expect, but to be returned into the power of her uncle, and immediately given to De Champignac.

Of both her dread was increaſed; for, the ſtep ſhe had taken to eſcape from their power would only urge them to treat her with leſs delicacy and forbearance whenever they ſhould again reſume it.

But, whatever were the apprehenſions of Coriſande, ſhe had now little opportunity of explaining them—for the hours paſſed away, and her royal protectreſs ſeemed again to have forgotten her; while the late interview had ſo impreſſed her with ideas of the diſtance between them,

them, that ſhe had not courage directly to apply to her and aſk for a private conference.

It did not appear that ſhe was wholly forgotten, as the woman who had before attended her brought her dinner, and towards evening a meſſage, that the Queen was going to remove to another part of the country, her pages and women having now arrived, and that her majeſty expected Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers to join them. Coriſande expreſſed many ſcruples as to the clothes with which ſhe had been furniſhed from the wardrobe of another, and which ſhe was of courſe unwilling to take; but theſe remarks were ended, by an aſſurance that the Queen had given her commands, as to whatever related to her; and that ſhe had only to conſider herſelf as belonging to her majeſty, on the ſame footing as other young ladies to whom ſhe was now to be introduced.

To theſe orders, which were certainly intended

intended as proofs of that attention ſo generouſly promiſed her, Coriſande had nothing to object; at leaſt nothing that it was poſſible for her now to offer.—And ſeeing no means of avoiding that which, though it was intended in kindneſs, might in the ſequel produce all the conſequences ſhe dreaded, ſhe prepared to obey.

Much time indeed was not allowed her for reflection. There ſeemed to be a great buſtle in the houſe, and from the windows of her room ſhe ſaw numbers of horſemen enter the court of the Caſtle, ſome of whom were certainly ſoldiers; but, as they wore no ſcarfs*, ſhe knew not to which party they belonged. Several litters, and ſuch coaches as were uſed at that period, then appeared, around which thoſe who ſeemed to be ſoldiers arranged themſelves. At the

* In the civil wars of France, the Catholics and adherents to the League were diſtinguiſhed by white ſcarfs or white bands round the arm.

ſame moment the door of the room in which Coriſande was, opened, and Monſieur d'Herault appeared at it; who, approaching her with an air of great reſpect, took her hand, and told her he was entruſted with the honour of conducting her to join the other ladies in attendance on the Queen of Navarre.

As ſhe went through the apartments and paſſages, her diſturbed ſpirits repreſented to her how little her father would approve of the ſituation in which ſhe was thus involuntarily about to be placed; ſcarcely leſs odious to him would be the marriage from which ſhe had riſked ſo much to eſcape; and to that event, ſo dreaded and deteſted, the circumſtances that were now occurring would in all probability lead. To theſe reflections were added the diſlike ſhe felt at being introduced to the Queen's attendants (all ſtrangers to her) in her preſent ſtate of mind, and diſguſt towards her conductor, who, as he led her, uttered the

the moſt extravagant compliments. A more painful ſtate could hardly be imagined; and when d'Herault helped her into a coach in which four other young perſons were already ſeated, it required all her reſolution to be able to return, even by a ſlight inclination of the head, the cold compliments which each ſeemed to think herſelf compelled to make. They then ſurveyed her with ſcrutinizing eyes, and ſmiled at each other. The faces of two of them ſhe thought expreſſed only contemptuous indifference; that of one of the others triumph and ſatisfaction, as if ſhe had heard an account of this addition to their ſociety, which her appearance by no means anſwered; while the fourth, who was in Coriſande's opinion the handſomeſt, though ſhe had leaſt the air of pretending to beauty, had a mild and rather dejected countenance, and ſpoke, when ſhe did ſpeak, with more gentleneſs and complacency than the reſt.

The

The carriage in which this party was placed preceded that of the Queen.—The roads ſoon became rugged and mountainous, and were rendered ſtill worſe by the heavy artillery which had lately paſſed them; for there was now an unremitted warfare between the Catholics and Calviniſts. Towns were taken and retaken continually; and the women, children, and very old people, who were the only inhabitants, for every man under ſixty was in arms, were at the mercy of the viſitors for the time being—ſometimes enduring all the horrors of a famine within their half-ruined habitations, and ſometimes driven into the fields, where unmarked and unnoticed they periſhed by cold and hunger.

Slowly as the royal cavalcade paſſed, ſome wretched groups who dared not approach, or were driven back by the ſoldiers if they attempted it, were ſtill ſeen, exhibiting ſuch pictures of the horrors of war, and the ſufferings of humanity,

manity, as made Coriſande tremble.—She remembered, that, like theſe unfortunate people, her only parent, if he yet lived, was a wandering exile, deploring his murdered wife, his children torn from his arms, and his houſe uſurped by another. She remembered, that, with thoſe who had inflicted all this on her father, his daughter now aſſociated! This reflection, and the repeated ſight of miſery, for which, far from being able to remove it, ſhe dared not even expreſs her pity, gave to her countenance an air of deeper melancholy, and ſhe leaned ſilently againſt the back of the coach, abſorbed in her own ſad thoughts, and neither heeding nor being heeded by her companions. They, however, were far from being ſilent. One complained of the extreme fatigue of the road; another expreſſed her fears of their being overturned; while Mademoiſelle de Saintval, whoſe opinion of herſelf ſeemed

to be the higheſt, and who had apparently taken the greateſt diſlike to Coriſande, was taken up with ſome other contemplation than even the ſafety of that delicate perſon of which ſhe was ſo fond; for, regardleſs of the ſhaking of the carriage, and the conſequent diſcompoſure of her dreſs, ſhe was continually looking from the window—yet ſtill retreated with an expreſſion of diſappointment, as if the object ſhe hoped to ſee did not appear.

At length, their vehicle having been with difficulty dragged up an abrupt and rocky hill, one of the horſes, before ſufficiently fatigued, could not proceed. Unmerciful were the whippings by which, not only the coachman, but ſome of the attendants, endeavoured to force him to further exertion. The wretched animal, being quite exhauſted, fell; and, as he was next the coach, the people, only by applying all their ſtrength, prevented it from falling down a precipice,

along

along the extreme edge of which the road ran.

The ladies, in great terror, were aſſiſted to get out on the oppoſite ſide. Coriſande only, who was left the laſt, ſeemed to be indifferent to the danger; and the footmen were about to ſhut the coach-door without regarding her, when a young man of very ſtriking appearance, mounted on a ſpirited horſe, rode up, and was about to ſpeak to the ladies, three of whom ſurrounded him, each eager to be liſtened to while ſhe recounted her fears and flutterings; but, having a glimpſe of Coriſande, he turned towards her, exclaiming, "Mademoiſelle, I entreat you to haſten from that dangerous ſituation!" The footmen were then helping her out, while from fatigue, and a ſort of hopeleſs torpor, ſhe could aſſiſt herſelf very little; which the young ſtranger perceiving, he haſtily left his horſe, and, taking her in his arms, placed her on

a piece of rock a little out of the road, where the moſt ſilent and reſerved of her four fellow travellers was already quietly ſe ated.

Though this action was only ſuch as mere humanity required, and was the impulſe of the moment, it was eaſy to ſee that the three ladies, whoſe complaints he had not attended to, were extremely diſpleaſed; though Mademoiſelle de Saintval was the only one who openly ſignified her diſpleaſure.

This young lady failed not to expreſs all the diſlike with which Coriſande inſpired her. But the Cavalier hardly noticed her; his whole attention was now occupied by another; and he took no pains to conceal the ſudden effect of beauty, which, under all the preſent diſadvantages, was, he thought, ſuperior to any he had ever before beheld.

The litter in which the Queen travelled was by this time arrived; and the young Cavalier, looking towards it, ſeemed

ſeemed to tear himſelf reluctantly away to attend on his royal miſtreſs, to whom he appeared to be relating the danger her ladies had been expoſed to. Their vehicle, which had been broken by the ſhock, was now as well repaired as ropes and ſuch contrivances could repair it; and the ſilent Coriſande followed into it her talkative companions.

Without any idea of offending, ſhe found that they were all offended. Even ſhe towards whom Coriſande had felt the moſt inclination, now regarded her with a ſort of cold diſdain; while Mademoiſelle de Saintval, ever arrogant and preſuming, ſeemed hardly able to reſtrain herſelf to mere inuendos and ſarcaſms, which were ſo conveyed, that Coriſande could not fail to underſtand them as being intended for her—though ſhe knew not why the ſhort attention of the young man ſhould be conſidered as of any kind of conſequence. To *her*

it was of none; for, though ſhe imagined, by the deference paid to him by the inferior attendants, and by the evident rivalry among the ladies, that he was a nobleman of high rank, her mind was ſo entirely engroſſed by the thoughts of her father, and the moſt ardent wiſh to put herſelf into his protection, that no other object had the power to affect her.

Unaccuſtomed, both from habit and temper, to that kind of miſchievous caballing which ſeemed to be the ſtyle of converſation among her new companions, ſhe ſoon loſt the unpleaſant impreſſion their rudeneſs had given her, in conſidering how ſhe might for ever eſcape from them. They, on the other hand, weary of the little reſtraint the preſence of a ſtranger had at firſt impoſed, began to talk to each other with a freedom that aſtoniſhed her; and the Queen being named in a manner which, in deſpite of herſelf, excited her curi-

oſity,

oſity, ſhe underſtood that the young Cavalier, whoſe unwiſhed-for civility had brought on her the enmity of theſe damſels, was Le beau Guiſcarde, ſometimes called Le Chevalier de St. Laurent, and the avowed favourite of the Queen of Navarre. From the manner in which the degree of favour he poſſeſſed was mentioned, Coriſande, young as ſhe was, and unpractiſed in even the language of the world, could not help fearing that there were, in the character of her protectreſs, ſome greater failings than ſhe had hitherto ventured to ſuppoſe. It was now impoſſible for her not to liſten attentively to all that paſſed; and it was with very uneaſy ſenſations ſhe thought it too plainly appeared, that Mademoiſelle Saintval now ſhared with her royal miſtreſs affections which Mademoiſelle D'Alincourt, the languid and penſive lady, feared *ſhe* had loſt. Nothing could be ſo humiliating

to Coriſande as the fear ſhe ſaw they entertained of *her* becoming a competitor. Whatever he might be to them, *ſhe* ſaw in the attention of ſuch a man only diſgrace; and all ſhe had heard from her father of the unprincipled manners and political profligacy of the Court of Catharine de Medicis now returned to her mind—though his mention of it before *her* had always been reſtrained by adherence to the maxim which ſays, "Guard the minds of the young from the knowledge that wickedneſs exiſts."

The daring confidence with which Mademoiſelle de Saintval ſeemed to value herſelf on the partiality of Le beau Guiſcarde, and the avowed enmity ſhe expreſſed towards Coriſande, even for the tranſient attention he had ſhown her, excited at once her diſguſt and apprehenſion, while all that had paſſed ſince her meeting the Queen of Navarre

raiſed

raiſed her wonder. It was impoſſible to account for the circumſtances that had ſince happened. The appearance of a conſiderable train ſo ſoon after ſhe had heard Margaret expreſs ſuch fears of being known, and the royal equipage and eclat now ſurrounding her, formed a ſtrange contraſt to the ſituation in which ſhe had at firſt ſeen her—a fugitive and a wanderer, without ſhelter or ſecurity. Had Coriſande known more of the hiſtory of the then * Court, all this would have been leſs ſurpriſing, though the impropriety of her own ſituation would have been more evident.

* Margaret de Valois left her huſband Henry of Navarre ſoon after their marriage. Her mother, to whom all her irregularities were probably owing, ſometimes fomented the differences which divided them, (though they had never loved each other,) and ſometimes affected to conciliate them. Margaret, who in very early life had loſt all regard to her own honour,

Already, however, it was a ſubject of extreme anxiety. Nothing was further from her thoughts than to become an attendant even on a Queen. To ſhare the humbleſt fortune her father could be reduced to was, in her opinion, infinitely preferable; and ſhe determined to ſeize the firſt occaſion that offered to addreſs herſelf to Queen Margaret, and entreat her majeſty's permiſſion to depart.

This opportunity was not likely to occur. Their journey continued till a late hour; the latter part of it was made by the light of torches carried by men on foot, who walked before and on

honour, ſcrupled not to intrigue with every man ſhe liked, though the Duke of Guiſe had always poſſeſſed her heart; and had ſhe been permitted to marry him, it is but charitable to believe, that ſhe would not have added to the liſt of Meſſalina's, by her perſonal depravity. She appears in other reſpects to have been of a good and generous character.

each

each ſide the cumbrous carriages, which, though change of horſes had been procured, moved heavily on. It ſeemed as if there was to be no end of this tedious removal, ſince they were not yet arrived at their firſt ſtage. Whither they were going Coriſande could not diſcover from the converſation of her fellow travellers, who, perhaps, were not themſelves acquainted with it.

It was paſt midnight when, having croſſed the ſmall river Sauble, they arrived at La Suſe, an inconſiderable place on its banks; where, though there were no accommodations, the Queen choſe to remain for the night, becauſe Mans, which was the next town where they could be found, was at that time in poſſeſſion of the Hugonots. Coriſande now underſtood, that it was her majeſty's intentions, by making a circuit of ſome miles the next day, to avoid its neighbourhood, and reach Alençon, where *Monſieur*, her youngeſt brother,

had promiſed, by the Chevalier de St. Laurent, to meet her, that they might unite their intereſt againſt the Queen Mother and the King of France; for, though *Monſieur* had almoſt always ſhown a ſingular and unmanly degree of malignity towards his ſiſter of Navarre, and though his baſe and treacherous character had been long known to her, the deſire that at preſent poſſeſſed her to repay the ſlights and injuries ſhe had lately ſuſtained from her mother and her elder brother, conquered her diſlike to any communication or union of intereſt with the Duke of Alençon* (now called *Monſieur*:) and Le beau Guiſcarde, the name by which her preſent

* This was the youngeſt ſurviving ſon of Henry the Second by Catharine de Medicis. All hiſtorians deſcribe his perſon as mean and ill-formed; while his mind was tainted with all the vices which the unhappy ſons of Catharine ſeem to have derived from their mother. Such as he was, however, our illuſtrious virgin Queen encouraged his addreſſes.

favourite

favourite was more known than by that of St. Laurent, had, by a ſingular chance, found an opportunity of obtaining for her the pretence, if not the reality, of preſent friendſhip from this brother, who had before almoſt invariably declared himſelf her enemy.

Every one of the young ladies with whom Coriſande had travelled had been accuſtomed to theſe excurſions, and knew tolerably well how to fence againſt the inconveniencies they might meet on their way. But Coriſande, without any ſuch knowledge, and without thoſe guards againſt cold with which they were provided, found herſelf deſerted in the houſe of a poor ſhopkeeper, on whom two or three of the Queen's people had been quartered. But his houſe (having not long before been plundered by the ſoldiers of the League) being abſolutely without furniture, except a wretched pallet bed and a wooden bench, the companions which chance had

had aſſigned to Coriſande ſoon left her, to ſeek better lodgings; and as ſhe found no diſpoſition to repoſe on ſuch a bed and in ſuch a place, ſhe prepared herſelf to paſs another night in melancholy contemplation on her former diſtreſſes and future proſpects. The daughter of the poor man under whoſe roof ſhe was, made up a fire in the wretched room aſſigned to her. She took ſuch refreſhment as thoſe poor impoveriſhed people could offer, and took it thankfully; for, after a ſhort examination of her preſent ſituation, ſhe was not only better ſatisfied, but diſpoſed to rejoice in it—ſince ſhe hoped, that, wholly forgotten by the Queen, and wilfully neglected by the attendants, ſhe might be entirely overlooked at their departure in the morning, and left unqueſtioned to purſue her original intention of finding protection in the arms of her father. The humble houſe that ſheltered her was at the

the extremity of the little town, and its windows looked over what had once been fields and vineyards; but the repeated ravages of parties of ſoldiers had given the whole country the look of a deſert. Coriſande, as by the pale clear light of the moon ſhe penſively ſurveyed it, thought of the general deſolation—then of her particular miſery. She dreaded the morning that might again engage her in ſociety for which ſhe was totally unfit, and, in the ſorrow of her heart, addreſſed herſelf to Heaven for protection, and apoſtrophized the ſpirit of her father: "Whereſoever thou art, my dear father! whether thou ſtill remaineſt in poverty and perſecution on earth, or art already among the bleſſed, oh! may I not hope that ſome conſciouſneſs of the fate of thy unhappy child will ſend thee to ſave her?"—Whenever Coriſande thought of her father as dead, ſhe was, at leaſt in that tenet which relates

relates to the ſouls of the departed, more than half a Catholic.

Abſorbed in theſe melancholy reflections, and almoſt regardleſs of the want of a bed, Coriſande paſſed the night. The day faintly dawned, and ſhe more than ever flattered herſelf ſhe was forgotten.

But this hope did not laſt long. There was a noiſe without the hut. She looked from the window, and ſaw the light of the riſing ſun reflected from the glittering caſque of the Chevalier de St. Laurent, whom ſhe better knew by the name of Le beau Guiſcarde. His orange-coloured and * white plumes

* The deep yellow, or orange colour, *couleur de feu*, was that which the Queen of Navarre preferred. Her own dreſs, as deſcribed by Brantôme, was frequently of velvet or ſatin of this ſhade, mixed with black and white, and embroidered with jewels. Her Knights of courſe took it for their livery.

waved

waved in the light air of the morning, and his whole appearance impreſſed the idea of a young warrior armed for conqueſt in the field, rather than of the favourite page of a voluptuous queen.

He entered the houſe, and inquired eagerly for the young lady attendant on the Queen of Navarre. The daughter of the hoſt led him to Coriſande.

He approached her with an air of great reſpect, yet with evident embarraſſment; lamented the inconvenient manner in which he feared Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers had paſſed the night; and aſſured her he had, as ſoon as it was in his power, ſought her every where, in the hope of being allowed to procure her proper accommodation.

Coriſande, to whom the ſcene of the preceding day was preſent, thought herſelf rather inſulted than obliged by theſe profeſſions. As ſhe was determined not to conſider herſelf as one of the Queen's maids, ſhe deſired to owe no favour

favour to one of the pages; her anſwer, therefore, was cold and haughty. Slightly thanking the Chevalier for the trouble he had taken, ſhe told him, that, as her being placed near the Queen of Navarre was only accidental, and would certainly be temporary, ſhe had no right to expect the ſame attention as her majeſty's ladies: that ſhe had nothing to complain of, as far as regarded the Queen; but, feeling herſelf out of her place, ſhe wiſhed to have an opportunity given her to thank her majeſty for the protection ſhe had been pleaſed to afford her, and to aſk her leave to purſue her original intention of returning to her father.

The beau Guiſcarde changed countenance when ſhe had thus ſpoken. He ſeemed at ſome loſs what to ſay; while Coriſande, collecting all the reſolution ſhe could, took advantage of his ſilence, and proceeded:

"As you, Sir, have the honour of admiſſion

admiſſion to the Queen's preſence, I entreat you to repreſent to her that my humble prayer is, to be ſuffered to remain here till I can put myſelf into the protection of one of my friends."

Guiſcarde ſuddenly interrupted her. "Mademoiſelle has then changed her intentions? She is undoubtedly ready to obey the wiſhes of Monſieur de Boiſdauphin, and the Marquis de Champignac is to be the happy man on whom ſhe beſtows herſelf!"

"No, Sir," replied Coriſande, diſquieted to find this young man ſo well informed of her affairs—"No, Sir; that by no means follows. It is to my father that I———"

"Your father!" cried Guiſcarde; "your father! Alas! Mademoiſelle——"

"What do you know, Sir, of my father?—Tell me, I beſeech you, are you acquainted with his ſituation? It would be happineſs, inexpreſſible happineſs,

pineſs, to me, to be only aſſured he lives. Tell me but that———"

"You *doubt* it, lovely Coriſande! and yet talk of putting yourſelf under his protection, of encountering dangers of which you are little aware, to ſeek—one who, perhaps, exiſts no longer."

"Let me conjure you," cried the agitated Coriſande, regardleſs now of the increaſed familiarity with which he addreſſed her—"let me implore you, if you have pity—if you have humanity, to tell me———"

"There *may* be motives more powerful than either, which would influence me to gratify Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers with whatever information I have; but——Does ſhe really imagine if Monſieur her father lives, that he is in a ſituation to receive and protect her?"

"In *any* ſituation I would aſk his protection; in exile, in poverty, in priſon!" "And

"And could he give it, Mademoiſelle, under ſuch circumſtances?"

"Oh heavens!" cried Coriſande with increaſed animation: "could I only ſee him—could I but be permitted once more to receive his bleſſing——— Sir," added ſhe, forgetting all the diſtance ſhe had at firſt obſerved, "if you have influence with the Queen, procure me inſtantly an opportunity of throwing myſelf at her majeſty's feet. I have heard that ſhe is good and compaſſionate—I have found her ſo towards me:—it is in her power———"

"Pardon me, her majeſty has no ſuch power: and I much fear, beautiful Coriſande, the moment you fly from ſuch kindneſſes as it is her inclination to ſhow you, you will be demanded by the Vidame, whoſe influence with the Queen Mother you well know; while Monſieur de Champignac has even more with the King. I leave it to your admirable

mirable underſtanding, Mademoiſelle, to tell you how far your laudable attempt to eſcape from them may have irritated the minds of thoſe two noblemen. Let me entreat you, therefore, do not quit the Queen of Navarre, who, while you rely on her protection, is too generous to give you up. But," added he, ſeeming to recollect himſelf, and aſſuming the ſemblance of humble reſpect, " whoever are ſo happy as to be admitted to the preſence of Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers feel a degree of enthuſiaſm which deprives them of all ſelf-government, or I ſhould not thus far have preſumed, when my purpoſe only was———"

Coriſande impatiently interrupted him: " Excuſe me, Monſieur le Chevalier, it is not to ſuch ſpeeches as theſe that I can liſten. You were going, I hoped, to tell me what you knew of my father. If you feel any intereſt in my

my ſituation, relieve me from the ſuſpenſe that makes it the moſt intolerable: *does* the Count de Beauvilliers live?"

"With what delight," ſaid Guiſcarde in a mortified and dejected manner, "with what delight ſhould I anſwer if I could do ſo ſatisfactorily! I *hope* your father lives—I even *believe* he does; but I muſt alſo tell you, that all I have ever heard about him makes me greatly apprehenſive that he has been and is a ſufferer under continued miſfortunes."

"If, however, he is living," ſaid Coriſande, "I will not deſpair:—to be aſſured of that would be a conſolation, whatever may be my own ſituation."

"Might I preſume to hope for being honoured with a commiſſion from you, I could in a very ſhort time make myſelf acquainted with more particulars than I now know; but as this information can be obtained only by my communication with certain Hugonot lords,

lords, which it might coſt me my life to avow, you muſt allow me the liberty of ſpeaking to you ſometimes apart when I have theſe communications to make. May I hope you will ſo far favour me with your confidence?"

Her earneſt deſire to hear of her father conquered all the objections Coriſande might otherwiſe have felt diſpoſed to make. She bluſhed while ſhe anſwered, "That intelligence of her father, however conveyed, would be welcome to her."

"Begin then, Mademoiſelle," ſaid he, "begin this mark of your generous condeſcenſion, by not noticing my having ſought and obtained the honour of this conference. The perſons ſent by the Queen to conduct you to join the reſt of her train will ſoon be here, and it is time for me to withdraw. Hope not, however, to obtain leave to quit her majeſty; I know it is her intention to keep you with her; and, in leaving her,

her you would fall into the very danger you have with courage ſo unprecedented nobly endeavoured to eſcape, a marriage with a man unworthy of you, one who, the more you knew of him, the more you muſt deteſt. Adieu, Mademoiſelle. Remember the favour you have deigned to grant me: my exertions in conſequence of it will be unwearied; and you may be aſſured that you ſhall very ſoon have information of the Count. Grant, Heaven, it may be ſuch as may relieve your anxiety."

Then, without waiting for an anſwer, and with a degree of haſte as if he had already outſtayed his time, the Chevalier de St. Laurent withdrew, leaving Coriſande ſurpriſed at his conduct, and, after a moment's reflection, not perfectly ſatisfied with her own.

Time, however, was denied her to conſider then what had paſſed, for, one of the Queen's women, a perſon of a lower rank than thoſe with whom ſhe

had been aſſociated the day before appeared, and informed her that her majeſty expected her attendance.

Coriſande followed this woman through two half-ruined ſtreets to a houſe, which was the beſt in the town, where a kind of court was aſſembled round Margaret, who nodded kindly to Coriſande when ſhe appeared among the crowd; and, whiſpering to one of the gentlemen who ſtood near her, he came round, and handed her to the back of the Queen's chair.

Others, however, were about her majeſty to whom it was neceſſary for her firſt to ſpeak. At length ſhe took occaſion to ſay, in what Coriſande conſidered as a very gracious manner—"I have been remiſs towards you, Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers, but I hope to make up for my omiſſion. Remain near me, I will give proper orders about you in future."

To expreſs ſomething like acknowledgment

ledgment was all Coriſande could do. It was not a proper time to repreſent to the Queen the many diſcomforts by which the performance of this promiſe would probably be embittered.

Perſons elevated as Margaret was, have no idea of ordinary life—notwithſtanding ſhe had, though yet a young woman, met with adventures which might have made her underſtand, that dependance on the will of another, and a total change in the modes of life, as well as to be thrown among ſtrangers, could not fail to diſtreſs a young perſon under the circumſtances Coriſande was now; yet, Margaret was no longer the wandering Princeſs of Romance who ſympathized with one eſcaping from what ſhe had herſelf vainly reſiſted, a compulſive marriage; ſhe was now the Queen of Navarre, ſurrounded by adulation, and the centre of a crowd of noble and military men, collected, ſome by one motive and ſome by another,

and treating her as their ſovereign. Theſe, however the preſence of the greater part of them might importune her, it was neceſſary for Margaret to conciliate. She therefore flattered ſome with a ſlight appearance of preference, for her perſon was beautiful, and her manners where ſhe deſired to pleaſe ſo faſcinating, that few could reſiſt her charms. Others, who were rather the votaries of ambition than of love, ſhe continued to allure by liſtening to their projects, humouring their ſelf-conſequence, and aſſuring them of ſuch little ſervices as ſhe could do them when the preſent diſagreement with her eldeſt brother ſhould be accommodated. Coriſande ſaw in a few hours much of the manners and, ſhe thought, but too much of the morals of a court. The Queen took no farther notice of her. Preparations were making to purſue the journey to Alençon, and thither, with the reſt of the Queen's

Queen's attendants, Coriſande was conveyed. Travelling, however, was leſs uneaſy to her than had been the preceding days, for ſhe was now placed in a coach, in which were only two of the Queen's dreſſers, who ſeemed to conſider her as their ſuperior, and treated her with none of that inſulting arrogance which ſhe had experienced from Les Demoiſelles d'Honeur. Coriſande imagined ſhe owed this change to the care of Guiſcarde, and could not help feeling gratitude towards him; he gave her, however, no opportunity to acknowledge it, for, though he rode twice by the coach, he appeared cautiouſly to avoid noticing thoſe within it. He had been among the perſons who ſurrounded the Queen in the morning, but his eyes were carefully turned from that part of the room where Coriſande appeared. The evening brought them to Alençon. Coriſande had a ſmall, but comfortable apartment aſſigned to

her near the Queen's lodgings. A woman of reſpectable appearance informed her, ſhe had the Queen's direction to attend her as her ſervant; and, when the young wanderer awoke on the following morning, ſhe found an handſome wardrobe provided for her, and a purſe on her table containing fifty pieces of gold. Theſe the woman aſſured her were ſupplied by the Queen; and it was only from her that Coriſande would have been contented to have received them.

CORISANDE had not been many days at Alençon before ſhe began to underſtand the deſign with which ſhe had been brought thither. The Baron d'Herault, who was unmarried, and whoſe

whoſe profuſion had conſiderably impaired his fortune, had no ſooner beheld the young heireſs of Beauvilliers, and underſtood her motives for having left her houſe, than he conceived deſigns of appropriating to himſelf this rich inheritage and its fair poſſeſſor. The large domain of Montrichard reached within a mile of his principal ſeigneurie, and their union would comprehend one of the fineſt eſtates in that part of France. To change the reſolution or evade the orders of the King, which had directed her marriage with one of his favourites, required, as d'Herault was aware, all his political ſkill. But the difficulty with which he foreſaw it would be attended did not diſcourage him. Queen Margaret was much his friend; ſhe was more — ſhe was his debtor; for, in ſome of thoſe diſtreſſes to which her generous ſpirit, as well as her unhappy propenſity to gallantry, had involved her, d'Herault had furniſhed

niſhed her with a conſiderable ſum of money.

But at the preſent moment the favour of Margaret would do him rather injury than ſervice with her brother and the Queen Mother. D'Herault therefore, leaving it to her to diſpoſe the mind of her young protegeé in his favour, departed, by the advice of the Queen of Navarre, for Vincennes, where Henry the Third then was; and ſhe undertook to keep Coriſande with her, and to diſcourage every other lover whom the beauty and fortune of the young heireſs might attract.

In leſſer affairs, as well as thoſe on which the fate of millions of human beings depended, the crooked and inſidious policy of Catharine de Medicis delighted to engage. As d'Herault had conſiderable power as a great feudal chief, it was the policy of Catharine to keep on good terms with him; and he, equally artful, endeavoured to procure

cure her conſent and aſſiſtance againſt the uncle and the lover favoured by the King, by means which he well knew would have their effect on the Queen Mother.

D'Herault then ſo far received encouragement from thoſe to whom he had applied, and was either ſo miſled by their artifices, or ſo far miſled himſelf, that he ſet out elated with hopes of ſucceſs, and arrived at Alençon four or five days after the Queen of Navarre had there met her brother *Monſieur*.

But even in ſo ſhort a ſpace new ſubjects of diſcontent had ariſen between two perſons, whoſe meeting had been without friendſhip, and whoſe projected union was founded only on the deſire of each to ſtrengthen themſelves againſt others, and not from any affection ſubſiſting between them as brother and ſiſter.

Leagues thus formed can never be permanent. *Monſieur* deteſted his ſiſter,

and many parts of her conduct gave him but too much ground for complaint. She on her part despised him. His feeble mind and total want of energy and perseverance—his awkward person and repulsive manners, together with a heart filled with every malignant passion, could not fail of making him an object of abhorrence to Margaret, who, though she had weaknesses and vices that degraded her, had many virtues to relieve her failings, and whose courage and generosity would have made her what Ninon de l'Enclos desired to be, *un honnete homme*; though she abandoned herself to excesses which deprived her of the name of *une honnete femme*.

To complete the mutual disgust between the brother and sister, the agents of Catharine were not idle. They fomented every petty dispute among the attendants who formed these two little courts; and Margaret suddenly quitted Alençon

Alençon in the night, with a very ſmall train, of whom, however, Coriſande made one.

A very few days had ſerved to convince her that the region where a ſtrange fatality had placed her was for her the unfitteſt in the world. Her young heart, warm and alive to every impreſſion of kindneſs, had attached itſelf on their firſt meeting to the Queen of Navarre, who, while ſhe appeared a ſufferer like herſelf, had taken her ſo generouſly into her care, and notwithſtanding the difference of their rank and of their ages, had talked to her as a friend, while ſhe promiſed to act like a protectreſs. Even the neglect with which ſhe was afterwards treated did not diſſipate this pleaſing illuſion. There is to the unexperienced ſomething faſcinating in the intereſt taken in their concerns by a ſuperior; and Margaret had manners ſo enchanting, with a perſon at once ſo lovely and commanding,

that Coriſande, who had long ſeen none but the cold bigots of the cloiſter, or the arrogant and deſigning Baronneſs, might well be happy in the hope of having acquired ſuch a friend. But, when Margaret appeared ſurrounded by her own and her brother's courtiers, and with the *ceremonies* of royalty, the charm was in a great degree diſſolved. The converſation indeed of the maids' of honour, during the firſt day's journey from the houſe of d'Herault, had leſſened her reſpect, in deſpite of all the arguments ſhe uſed to perſuade herſelf that ſome part of that diſcourſe which related to Le beau Guiſcarde, could never allude to the Queen as his paramour.

But now, before a fortnight had elapſed, there was no poſſibility of being blind to this and many other unwelcome truths. The envy of which ſhe ſaw herſelf the object, it was, ſhe thought, hard to incur for a preference ſhe ſo little

little desired as that of the Chevalier de St. Laurent. Nor was the excessive malignity borne towards her by Mademoiselle de Saintval; and the more sullen, but not less inveterate hatred of Mademoiselle d'Alincourt, the greatest evils she had to apprehend. The beau Guiscarde, who affected not even to be conscious of her existence in the presence of his royal mistress, watched his opportunities so well, that Corisande could not always escape hearing declarations which, as well from the secrecy which he implored her to observe, as from the rank of him who made them, she could not but consider as insulting. But, if to escape or repel these addresses was difficult, Corisande found it much more so to avoid hearing those of the Baron d'Herault.

The Baron approached with every advantage which must, he thought, insure him a welcome reception. He had illustrious birth, a nominally great fortune,

fortune, a good perſon, and the recommendation of Queen Margaret in his favour; and he even ventured to inſinuate, that the commands of the King directing her to beſtow herſelf on the Marquis de Champignac were to be reverſed in his favour. Coriſande heard all this with impatience, and could hardly prevail on herſelf to anſwer him with calmneſs, for, without preciſely knowing why, ſhe had conceived an unconquerable averſion from the perſon of Monſieur d'Herault. There was an arrogant ſelf-ſufficiency about him that almoſt excited her ſpleen; and her eyes refuſed to ſee in his perſon the elegance he thought he poſſeſſed, and which he was allowed to poſſeſs by many others. Coriſande thought too there was ſomething ungenerous in his proceeding to beg her of the King as a deodand, by which he hazarded compelling her again into the power of her uncle.

Thither

Thither, indeed, ſhe now thought her return inevitable; for, Margaret could not protect her againſt him if he choſe to demand her under an order from the King. The Queen's court, in conſequence of the diſſentions ariſing at Alençon, was now reduced to three or four young lords, including the Baron d'Herault; the Chevalier de St. Laurent, and five or ſix other men of inferior rank, her own ladies, and two confeſſors, who were conſidered at that time as men who were not idle, as far as their vocation of hearing the delinquency of many of the party extended.

Coriſande had few opportunities of ſeeing the Queen, and never any of converſing with her alone. Margaret, like many others who really intend well, was deprived of the means of executing her good intentions by the pecuniary difficulties in which ſhe had involved herſelf; and, as it was to her a deſirable circumſtance that d'Herault ſhould become

come the huſband of Coriſande, ſhe did not love to recollect how poſſible it was that the obligation of ſaving her from the perſecution of the Marquis de Champignac would be cancelled if ſhe was now expoſed to that of d'Herault.

Of another perſecution Margaret was by no means aware. That the charms of a mere child ſhould affect the heart of the beau Guiſcarde, never entered into her imagination; nor did ſhe think it poſſible that one who owed his fortune to her liberality, ſhould venture to look forward to any more permanent eſtabliſhment; nor, laſtly, that Guiſcarde, who was only a cadet in a houſe of recent and inferior nobility, ſhould aſpire to marry the heireſs of one of the firſt families in France. For all theſe reaſons, and becauſe he always affected the utmoſt indifference towards Coriſande, Margaret had not the leaſt ſuſpicion that St. Laurent not only addreſſed

dreſſed her ward in the moſt paſſionate terms, but really felt for her a paſſion ſuch as he had never before been ſenſible of. But, though Margaret was blind to this, others were more quick ſighted; Meſdemoiſelles d'Alincourt and Saint-val had perceived too early for their own repoſe the preference of Guiſcarde; but they were both too much in his power to dare to communicate their obſervations to their miſtreſs, and could only prevent, by every means in their power, interviews between him and this formidable rival, for which Coriſande was infinitely obliged to them, as it ſaved her from ſome diſagreeable repetitions of a determination ſhe had formed never to liſten to him with favour.

The diſſimulation, the perpetual attempts of the courtiers to circumvent and undermine the fortunes of each other, which are the conſtant uſage of courts, were all hateful to Coriſande, who had been

been taught that truth was the foundation and the guard of all other virtues; but, added to theſe ſubjects of diſlike, was the ill-regulated life of the Queen of Navarre, whoſe example was followed by thoſe about her; and Coriſande, every day more and more ſenſible of the impropriety of her ſituation, thought only of the means of eſcaping from it.

Nothing appeared more eaſy than her deſiring to be diſmiſſed: but, if Margaret would have agreed to do ſo, whither could ſhe go? On one ſide ſhe ſaw her uncle, who had been earneſtly ſoliciting to have her given up to him, and againſt whom ſhe had no protection but what the Queen of Navarre at preſent afforded her; on the other ſhe beheld d'Herault, who, when irritated and thrown off his guard by the poſitive refuſal to accept of him, had been indiſcreet enough to hint, that he ſhould

heſitate

heſitate at nothing to ſecure the happineſs he ſought. His fierceneſs terrified her, yet ſerved only to confirm her reſolution never to be his wife.

The unhappy Coriſande had never liſtened to Guiſcarde but in the hope of obtaining intelligence of her father, which he had promiſed to collect. But, after allowing of two or three interviews with this intention, ſhe was convinced he did but trifle with her ſolicitude; yet ſhe imagined from ſeveral circumſtances ſhe had gathered, that the Comte de Beauvilliers was certainly living, though in priſon; but where or by what unfortunate deſtiny he was ſtill in confinement when the Calviniſts were in great force, and ſo many noblemen of that perſuaſion ſtill in arms, Coriſande could not diſcover, and her conjectures ſerved only to render her wretched.

In her anxiety to know more than ſhe had gathered from Guiſcarde, Coriſande

ſande one day took occaſion to ſay to d'Herault, that every application to her would be for ever uſeleſs, and that nothing would ever engage her to give herſelf away without the conſent of her father.

" Your father! Mademoiſelle, are you ſure then that you have a father?"

" Perfectly ſure," replied Coriſande; though while ſhe ſpoke her heart beat, and her voice trembled with the dread of being contradicted.

" Indeed! — It is fortunate indeed that you are ſo well informed. I ſuppoſe, however, you know that he is dead in law?"

The blood that had forſaken her cheeks through fear now returnd thither from an emotion of joy. The anſwer of d'Herault was undoubtedly a confirmation that her father lived.

" The law that calls him ſo," replied Coriſande, " has nothing to do with the affections of nature. Oh! no;—I am

ſtill

ſtill his child. No law made on earth can diſſolve that ſacred tie;—it is the pride of my life to be the daughter of this unhappy exile."

"Exile!" exclaimed d'Herault with a malicious ſmile: "Do you believe De Beauvilliers is an exile? Oh! then you were doubtleſs going to ſeek him in a foreign country when the Queen of Navarre ſo generouſly afforded you an aſylum. Mademoiſelle, you are too young for ſuch an undertaking: let me recommend it to you as a friend, ſince you are pleaſed to limit my title to adviſe you, let me recommend it to you to take care how you irritate thoſe who have the power to let fall on the head of Monſieur de Beauvilliers the puniſhment which has long been his due."

Coriſande, at this inhuman menace, loſt all patience, and, giving a loſe to her indignation, ſhe piqued the inſolent and violent d'Herault into a more unguarded

guarded avowal than he had before made, and ſhe became certain, from the expreſſions he uſed, that her father had been long and was ſtill a priſoner, from whence it was probable, too probable, it was not intended that he ſhould ever be liberated, unleſs by death.

But, where was this beloved and moſt unhappy father? In which of the *King's Caſtles* was his daughter to think of him? Alone, perhaps in want, counting with an hopeleſs heart the long days of paſſed captivity, and looking in ſick deſpondence towards thoſe to come; cut off from ſociety—mourning over his murdered happineſs, and never hearing the ſound of a friendly voice, or ſeeing any face but that of his jailor. The image of her father in this wretched ſituation was from this moment ever preſent to Coriſande. His pale image, meagre with famine and loaded with chains, haunted her dreams. Sometimes his voice ſeemed calling on Coriſande, and bidding her

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an everlaſting adieu. At others, he ordered her to fly from thoſe who had deſtroyed her mother and perſecuted her father to death by cruelty more refined and protracted. Occupied with theſe ideas, Coriſande became indifferent even to her own exiſtence. Her ſleep and appetite forſook her; the equality of temper, which amidſt all the ſolicitudes and diſcomforts of her wayward deſtiny ſhe had preſerved, was now no longer at her command; and ſhe ſometimes thought of the wildeſt and moſt hazardous plans of eſcape; ſometimes ſunk into torpid dejection. The ſucceſſes of the Calviniſt army, which ſhe had often conſidered with hope, and liſtened to the detail of them with internal ſatisfaction, had now loſt much of their effect. Her father was no longer acting in them; ſhe cheriſhed no longer the hope which had ſoothed even her preſent unſettled and comfortleſs ſtate; that in ſome of the revolutions,

volutions, which continually happened as the fortune of war favoured one party or the other, he might himſelf reſcue her, and give her the only protection ſhe coveted.

The open and imperious addreſſes of d'Herault, and the clandeſtine importunity of St. Laurent, were now repelled with equal aſperity. The Queen deigned to remonſtrate with her in favour of the former; and Coriſande ſpoke to her as ſhe had done on their firſt meeting, thanking her for the intereſt her majeſty took in her eſtabliſhment, but declaring that Monſieur d'Herault was not at all leſs unwelcome to her than De Champignac himſelf.

Margaret, ſurpriſed at the ſpirit with which ſhe ſpoke, was immediately ſtruck with the idea that ſo young a woman could not ſo peremptorily determine againſt two men, either of whom would have appeared unexceptionable to moſt girls of her age, unleſs ſhe had ſome concealed

concealed preference for a third. This remark the Queen ſoon repeated to her ladies; and then it was that their anſwers, though vague and indirect, pointed out Guiſcarde as this ſecretly favoured lover. Margaret, lively and impetuous in all her paſſions, felt in a moment all the torments of jealouſy; and immediately fancying ſhe remembered a thouſand minute circumſtances which confirmed this, ſhe was diſpoſed to give up Coriſande inſtantly into the power of Boiſdauphin, while the ingratitude and perfidy of Le beau Guiſcarde ſeemed to merit heavier puniſhment than ſhe had the power of inflicting. Such was the violence of her anger and indignation, that the perſons who had raiſed this tempeſt of paſſion were themſelves terrified at the conſequences they now foreſaw; and though they deteſted the innocent Coriſande, it was with reluctance they obeyed the

Queen, who ordered her immediately to be brought into her preſence.

Coriſande heard with aſtoniſhment and terror of ſome crime which had excited the Queen's wrath. Her majeſty was, however, much too angry to be articulate; and Coriſande, conſcious of her own innocence, recollected herſelf, and calmly prepared to anſwer, when it was underſtood ſhe knew of what ſhe was accuſed.

As ſoon as it was underſtood to be a charge of having encouraged the paſſion of the Chevalier de St. Laurent, ſhe reſolutely anſwered—

"Your majeſty has been miſinformed. I have given no ſuch encouragement. It is true that Monſieur de St. Laurent has ſpoken to me repeatedly of love; but whenever it has been poſſible I have refuſed to liſten to him. I have told him that, if his perſon and his *morals* were agreeable to me, (which they are not,)

not,) it is not for the Chevalier de St. Laurent to pretend to the daughter of the Count de Beauvilliers."

The haughty air with which theſe words were delivered, entirely correſponded with their purport, and Margaret felt herſelf for a moment humbled and debaſed; who had ſtooped from the throne, and from the dignity of honour, to favour the minion thus proudly rejected by a child.

There is no ſenſation ſo painful as the conſciouſneſs of ſelf-degradation. Margaret, unable to endure, and fearful of not concealing, what ſhe felt, ordered Coriſande to leave her, bidding her, however, prepare for an immediate return to Monſieur de Boiſdauphin, whoſe ſolicitations ſhould no longer be denied.—Coriſande withdrew in ſilence, endeavouring to obtain courage to encounter what now appeared inevitable. The Queen, more miſerable from ſelf-reproach, forbade any of her attendants

to follow her, and ſhut herſelf up to reflect on this new inſtance of the falſehood and perfidious nature of man.

AT this time Margaret and her little train were at Chartres, whither ſhe had retired on ſuppoſing herſelf ill-treated by Monſieur, when one of thoſe changes occurred, unaccountable to all who were not immediately about the royal perſonages concerned; a reconciliation as ſudden as the difference which had driven the Queen of Navarre from her brother's Court, was effected; oblivion of all diſputes was mutually agreed upon; Henry and his mother promiſed to forgive thoſe of Margaret's ſervants who

who had contrived her escape; and she was herself to be reinstated in the situation her conduct had for a while forfeited*.

Corisande then, to whom the Queen of Navarre had never spoken since the accusation brought against her relative to Guiscarde, saw herself, like others who had no will of their own, conveyed among the Queen's retinue to Vin-

* The continual love intrigues, as well as the various political interests which were always agitating the Courts of France and Navarre, occasioned the most unexpected and discreditable events. Quarrels and reconciliations were frequent. The Queen Mother fomented disagreements between her children, as the best means of securing her own power; and Margaret, who had always some favourite to whom she sacrificed all other considerations, often left her mother in disgust, and secretly escaped to pass her time with one or other of these favoured lovers; while her brothers, who were unfeeling and unprincipled, are said sometimes to have participated too deeply in the vices that disgraced her, and, at others, persecuted and confined her.

cennes, where Henry the Third then held his Court, and ſhe could no longer doubt of being immediately given up to her uncle. During the journey, Guiſcarde did not appear as on former occaſions attending the Queen's litter on horſeback, equipped like a hero of romance; he was not ſeen at all; and from the little Coriſande could gather from the hints and broken converſation ſhe heard among the dreſſers and other perſons, ſhe thought he was in diſgrace with his miſtreſs, and baniſhed her preſence for ever.

It was ſome conſolation to be relieved from his importunity, though too many other cauſes of diſquiet ſtill remained to the unhappy Coriſande.

But, without any one friend to whom ſhe could confide her ſorrows, or who would aſſiſt her to eſcape from them, complaint was uſeleſs; and ſhe could only prepare to ſuffer in ſilence the miſeries that awaited her.

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To attempt once more to escape before she was again in the power of her uncle, was the only means by which it appeared possible for her to avoid a destiny a thousand times worse than death. Yet, how effectuate her escape? and, if effected, to whom could she go? The illusion that had formerly animated her exertions had faded away. Her father certainly lived, but he was no longer able to protect her; he was himself enduring a living death; and even the assurance of his yet existing, (which Corisande once thought it would be comfort enough to know,) now seemed only an aggravation of her sufferings, by inflicting solicitude soothed by no rational hope. Too well apprised of the inexorable nature of the persons in whose power he was held, Corisande could only think of him with the same agonizing sensations as *he* feels, who sees the friend he loves enduring the miseries of an acute disease, from which

there is no deliverance but by death.—In addition to theſe melancholy reflections, Coriſande had reaſon to dread, that her rejection of either D'Herault or De Champignac might embitter his impriſonment, and accelerate his fate.

To conjectural wretchedneſs only Coriſande was not long left. On the arrival of Queen Margaret at Vincennes, her ſuite remained at Paris, whither ſhe came herſelf a few days afterwards; and hardly had an hour paſſed before a meſſage was ſent to Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers, that the Queen deſired to ſee her.

There was no other perſon preſent, and Coriſande reſumed her courage. Margaret began by lamenting that it was no longer poſſible for her to grant her the aſylum ſhe had promiſed—the Vidame de Boiſdauphin had reclaimed his niece, and there was an order iſſued by the King to have her immediately delivered to him—"Nor have I, Mademoiſelle,"

moiſelle," ſaid Margaret, "any power whatever to keep you with me: as the ward of Boiſdauphin, you muſt obey. The wife of the Baron d'Herault *he* might *himſelf* have protected; hay, he may ſtill protect you, if happily you ſhould have changed your mind."

"Your majeſty is entitled to my gratitude," ſaid Coriſande. "I am unfortunate, and muſt endure. I had rather be made miſerable by any one elſe than make myſelf ſo. I never will voluntarily become the wife either of Monſieur d'Herault, or of him for whom the Vidame deſigns me."

The countenance of the Queen loſt the calmneſs it wore at the beginning of the converſation. St. Laurent was not forgotten, and again Margaret gave way to the jealouſy which, as far as it related to Coriſande's conduct, ſhe had ſtifled; for, naturally generous, her goodneſs of heart conquered every paſſion but that unfortunate one, which

rendered all the reſt miſunderſtood or abortive; and, after the anſwer Coriſande made when her firſt ſuſpicion was explained, the Queen had forgiven what appeared not only involuntary but uneaſy to her, while the royal indignation fell ſolely on the fickle and ungrateful Guiſcarde.

But, now it again ſeemed hardly to be doubted that *her* eyes were not alone faſcinated by Guiſcarde, and that the young heart of Coriſande was affected by the ſame malady. The Queen therefore diſmiſſed her in viſible diſpleaſure; and Coriſande expected nothing but to be immediately given up to her uncle, who was, ſhe underſtood, arrived at Paris to receive her.

But, before the Vidame undertook to exerciſe that power with which the King's pleaſure rather than the rights of nature inveſted him, De Champignac had prevailed upon Boiſdauphin to allow him to try what effect his perſon and eloquence

quence, which he believed to be altogether irreſiſtible, would have on Coriſande.

Over the royal trifler, who now made an edict to ſtrip his people, and now took the lap-dog of ſome unfortunate* recluſe, every intriguer who choſe it might by ſome means or other obtain influence. That of De Champignac was ſtill in its meridian, though he had ſeveral rivals, and he contrived it ſhould be at the expreſs deſire of the King her brother, that Margaret kept the young heireſs ſome days longer with her.

Coriſande, ignorant of this arrangement, was ſurpriſed at the delay, yet in hourly expectation of her uncle, when

* *Il alloit ordinairement avec la Reine ſon Eſpouſe, par les rues et maiſons de Paris, prendre les petits chiens qui leur plaiſoient fort: alloient auſſi par tous les monaſteres des femmes aux environs de Paris, faire queſte de petits chiens, au grand regret des dames qui les avoient.*

De Champignac, cauſing himſelf to be announced in great form, was ſhown into the apartment ſhe occupied.

If it were univerſally true, that the female heart is never fortified againſt a handſome coxcomb, Coriſande would aſſuredly have ſeen the Marquis de Champignac with very different eyes, for his perſon and face were uncommonly beautiful: they gave indeed rather the idea of the beauty of very early youth, or that of a woman, than of a man of five-and-twenty. His dreſs, conſiſting of coloured ſatin, was ſtudied with the greateſt nicety, his laces the fineſt that could be procured, and his hair moſt delicately buckled*. Coriſande, much as ſhe had heard of him, beheld him with aſtoniſhment, but it was mingled with unconquerable diſguſt.

* Le Roy danſoit ſouvent maſqué et faiſoit collation avec ſes mignon, friſez, et fraiſez. Regne de Henri III.

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The arrogance and self-consequence with which he addressed her, the reproaches he made her for having, before she knew him, rejected him, together with the conviction he appeared to have that he need only be seen and heard to cause an entire alteration in her sentiments, operated very differently indeed from what he expected. Corisande rejected him with a degree of haughtiness which he had never before experienced; and upon his threatening her, towards the close of the dialogue, that he should appeal to the authority of the Vidame her uncle, she told him, without at all attempting to soften the declaration, that she would meet death in its most hideous form, rather than marry a man from whom her heart and her reason equally recoiled.

Reason! a young woman dare to talk of reason! — De Champignac had never before heard any thing so provokingly

provokingly abſurd; never had he before experienced ſo ſevere a mortification. Unuſed to the ſlighteſt oppoſition, and naturally preſumptuous and vindictive, he could not a moment ſtifle the rage he felt, and he gave vent to it in the moſt intemperate manner to the firſt perſon he met, who happened to be Mademoiſelle Saintval.

This young lady liſtened to him a while in ſilence; and then laughing immoderately at his diſtreſs, ſhe aſked him, if it was really poſſible he could be ignorant of what was notorious to every body elſe?

De Champignac demanded an explanation; and the Demoiſelle named St. Laurent as the favoured lover of Coriſande; adding, that his abſence was partly in compliance with an order given by the Queen of Navarre; but yet more, that he might concert meaſures to carry off Coriſande to one of

of the fortreſſes of the Hugonots, where her reception was already ſecured, and where he was to marry her.

Stung to fury, the Marquis quitted his malicious informer, who rejoiced in the hope of gratifying her revenge againſt St. Laurent; while De Champignac immediately applied to the King, and demanded permiſſion to ſeek from Guiſcarde ſuch ſatisfaction as his injured honour and diſappointed love demanded.

Henry, who deteſted St. Laurent, would rather have had De Champignac take his remedy by aſſaſſination than that he ſhould riſk his life in duel with him. But De Champignac, piqued that it ſhould be ſuppoſed there was any hazard to *him* from the ſkill or courage of the Beau Guiſcarde, whom he affected to deſpiſe, preſſed for the liberty of ſummoning him to the field; and Henry, who loved a ſhow,

ſhow*, conſented to gratify his favourite, in the hope of puniſhing the favourite of his ſiſter.

St. Laurent

* Such kinds of combats were encouraged by the Court; and Henry, as well as the three Queens, Catharine de Medicis, her daughter Queen Margaret of Navarre, and Louiſa of Savoy, Henry's Queen, were not unfrequently ſpectators of theſe, as well as of the moſt cruel executions. The following narrative marks the manners of the age, and the character of the laſt King of the race of Valois.

" Le Dimanche vingt ſeptiſme Avril, pour demeſler une querelle née pour fort legere occaſion, le jour precedent en la cour du Louvre, entre le Sieur de Quelus, l'un des grands mignons du Roi, et le jeune d'Antragues, que l'on appelloit d'Antraquet, favory de la Maiſon de Guiſe:

" Ledit Quelus, avec Maugiron, et Livarot; et d'Antraquet avec Riberac, et le jeune Shomberg, ſe trouverent des cinq heures du matin au marché aux Chevaux, prez la Baſtille, et la combatirent ſi furieuſement, que le beau Maugiron et le jeune Shomberg demeurerent mort ſur la place; Riberac des coups qu'il y receut, mourut le lendemain a midi. Liverot fut ſix ſemains malade, mais enfin reſchapa. Antraquet s'en alla ſain et ſauf avec un petit

St. Laurent was challenged to appear on a certain day, according to the forms uſed at that time; and to bring with him two friends. Irritated by the rejection he had received from Coriſande, for whom his paſſion was almoſt frenzy, and his heart reproaching him for ingratitude towards his royal benefactreſs,

petit coup, qui n'eſtoit qu'une eſgratigneure. Quelus, auteur et agreſſeur de la noiſe, de dix-neuf coups qu'il y receut, languit trente-trois jours, et mourut le Jeudi vingtneufieſme Mai à l'hotel de Boiſy, ou il profita le grand faveur du Roi, qui l'alloit tous les jours voir, et ne bouget du chevet de ſon lict, et qui avoit promis au chirurgiens qui le penſoient, cent mil franes, au cas qu'il revint en convaleſcence; et a ce beau mignon cent mil ecus, pour lui faire avoir bon courage de guerir.—A la verité, le Roy porta a lui et a Maugiron une merveilleuſe amitié; car il les baiſa tous deux morts, fit tondre leur teſtes, et importer et ſerrer leur blond cheveux; oſta a Quelus les pendans de ſes oreilles, que lui meme auparavant lui avoit donnez, et attachez de ſa propre main."—This was undoubtedly the age of Chivalry.

St. Laurent

St. Laurent heard the challenge with a deſperate kind of ſatisfaction, and repaired with two friends to the place of aſſignation — his natural courage redoubled by deſpair.

The combat was fierce; for De Champignac, with all his effeminacy, was not deſtitute of perſonal reſolution. He was carried from the field, as it was ſuppoſed, mortally wounded; and Le beau Guiſcarde paid for his temerity with his life. He died covered with wounds, and entreating thoſe about him to bear his laſt adieu to Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers, and to tell her, that, ſince to live for her was denied him, he died with pleaſure.

One of the Marquis's party was alſo dangerouſly hurt; and a young man who was called L'Infelici, and paſſed for an Italian, who had appeared as one of Guiſcarde's friends, received a wound in the arm; the other two eſcaped with little injury.

The

The long confinement of Champignac delivered Coriſande from his importunities. Her heart, though it felt no preference for Guiſcarde, was too good not to be affected by his death; but none but Queen Margaret and herſelf remembered him a week after it had happened, unleſs it was Mademoiſelle de Saintval, who never having forgiven Guiſcarde for his preference of Coriſande, rejoiced in having been in ſome meaſure the means of this cataſtrophe. Mademoiſelle d'Alincourt had retired ſome time before to expiate the errors of her unfortunate love in a convent.

Margaret, till the grief ſhe really felt for the loſs of the laſt unhappy favourite was mitigated by ſome riſing partiality for another, retired to a houſe ſhe poſſeſſed at Paſſy. An order of the Queen Mother's would have prevented Coriſande from attending her, if either of them had wiſhed for that attendance.

Coriſande,

Coriſande, therefore, remained at Paris, and ſaw herſelf transferred from the ſuite of Margaret to that of Catharine—a change which added to her apprehenſions of never more being allowed to enjoy one moment of freedom, or of repoſe.

What were the motives of the Queen, who now loaded her with profeſſions of kindneſs, and requeſted that, though not in her ſervice, ſhe would be near her perſon, Coriſande could by no means conjecture. If to promote her marriage with De Champignac, all this evidently ſtudied generoſity was ſuperfluous, as it had hitherto been underſtood, that the King's mandate alone was not to be reſiſted, and that youth and age, beauty and deformity, ſenſe and idiotiſm, muſt be ſubjected to ſwear eternal affection to each other on the ſignification of *Tel eſt notre plaiſir*.

Nothing therefore was more ſtrange than that Henry or his mother ſhould endeavour

endeavour to obtain by artful condeſcenſion what they might compel by their imperial ordinance. Coriſande knew herſelf to be a defenceleſs creature, wholly at their mercy. They might take the eſtates which were yet called hers, and might give them, as many others had been given, to one of the Court minions. Coriſande conſidered their forbearance with ſurpriſe; but it was not in her power to feel gratitude, and towards Queen Catharine in particular, in whom ſhe beheld the evil genius that had occaſioned ſo much public and private miſery, ſhe felt a degree of deteſtation which the forms of a Court hardly enabled her to conceal. Had ſhe known the views with which Catharine detained and flattered her, it would have been impoſſible for her to have ſubmitted to thoſe forms without reſiſtance.

While the two armies, that of the Calviniſts under the King of Navarre, and

and that of the League under Henry's generals, were engaged in daily ſkirmiſhes, and, whenever they met in any numbers, bloody and hard-fought battles enſued; while towns, adhering to one or the other party, were every day taken on one ſide or the other, and civil war in all its horrors ravaged the diſtracted kingdom; the two Courts of France and of Navarre not unfrequently met: and, amidſt ſcenes of luxurious magnificence and refined debauchery, the miſery of the inſulted people was forgotten. But this was an age when *vice loſt half its deformity by loſing its groſſneſs.*

Catharine of Medicis had not only the art to govern her own offspring, all of whom partook of her diſpoſition, but ſhe had made the more elevated mind and excellent heart of her ſon-in-law, Henry of Navarre, her ſtudy. It was not indeed very difficult to diſcover by what means he might be ſeduced, ſince his

his paſſion for beautiful women very ſoon diſcloſed itſelf; and when ſhe deſired to detach the warlike monarch from the purſuit of conqueſt, and to acquire a knowledge of his plans, ſhe threw in his way ſome young beauty, whoſe faſcination he had not always the virtue to reſiſt, even when conſcious of the ſnare.

The King of France and the Queen Mother, removing to Chambord on account of an infectious diſtemper that raged in the neighbourhood of Paris, were there met, on Catharine's invitation, by the King of Navarre. To negotiate for a truce was the oſtenſible reaſon of this junction: but both parties had other views, or imagined they had ſuch, as an excuſe for forming a temporary league of pleaſure, which languiſhed when the two Courts were ſeparated.

Pleaſure, therefore, now ſeemed the buſineſs of every body. Aſſemblies, in which

which all who chose it assumed some disguise, were given in this immense edifice*, and Catharine encouraged the fantastic and extravagant inventions, calculated to intoxicate the young, and pique the sensuality of the fatigued voluptuary. Yet, amidst all this, her political projects never were a moment forgotten. Her present purpose was to attract the King of Navarre by the uncommon beauty of the young Corisande. She wished that he should attach himself to one who would occupy his time, and draw his attention from his too successful warfare. From what she had remarked of the high spirit and strong understanding of the heiress of Beauvilliers, Catharine imagined, that, if the King of Navarre once could be engaged to notice her, her beauty, sense, and simple manners, so unlike those of most of the young women about the

* The Castle of Chambord.

Court,

Court, would for a while at leaſt fix him. As to any principle that might deter her from making an experiment ſo probably fatal to the peace and honour of the object through whom it was to be made, Catharine de Medicis was too thoroughly a politician to ſuffer conſcientious ſcruples of any ſort to interfere with her views.

With theſe views, therefore, the Queen condeſcended to overwhelm Coriſande with her gracious attentions. The coldneſs with which they were received did not change or diminiſh her bounties: the moſt becoming dreſſes were ſent as preſents; and on a particular night, when there was to be a maſque, it was ſignified to Coriſande that ſhe was expected to appear dreſſed in one which the Queen ſent her own tire-woman to fit; and as ſhe had pleaded timidity as a reaſon againſt dancing, though it was in truth from feeling that oppreſſion of the heart which made

every ſuch exertion painful to her, Catharine deſired her to remain near herſelf, as a ſpectator of the pleaſures of the evening. Coriſande, though indifferent to every thing that was offered her, obeyed, becauſe it was impoſſible to refuſe.

The King of France, his favourites, and many ladies of the Court, appeared in groteſque dreſſes. Coriſande beheld them all with pity bordering on contempt, when her thoughts were called home on obſerving herſelf pointed out by the Queen to a nobleman of majeſtic appearance, who, gazing on her a few moments, approached and ſpoke to her. It was the King of Navarre.

All the ſufferings of her father in the ſervice of this Prince, and the religion he profeſſed, were inſtantly preſent to Coriſande; and it was theſe recollections, rather than awe, which made her anſwers trembling and incoherent. To Henry, however, this *naïveté* had a thouſand

thouſand charms; but, when ſhe recovered herſelf from this firſt embarraſſment, and anſwered him with her uſual ſenſe and dignity, he thought he beheld a creature indeed of a ſuperior order, and her beauty, dazzling as it was, appeared to be the leaſt of her perfections.

The Queen Mother, aſſured that the train ſhe had lain would be effectual, was already reckoning upon the advantages to be derived from it: ſhe ſaw that Henry could hardly tear himſelf away from the ſpot where Coriſande ſat, and that, when ſome attention to others compelled him to do ſo, his eyes were continually turned towards her; he ſeemed to be inquiring about her of every body he ſpoke to—and it was true, that ſince he had ſeen her, he recollected having heard of ſomething ſingular that had befallen her, but ſo imperfectly, that in the hurry of a campaign it had been forgotten.

At length he found in one of his own attendants, a perſon who had made himſelf maſter of every particular relative to Coriſande; and he was relating them to the King, when a maſk, who had long been attentively obſerving her, approached the object of their converſation.

"Does Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers enjoy this brilliant ſpectacle?" ſaid he: "Does ſhe *receive* as much pleaſure as the ſight of her gives to all who aſſiſt at it?"

Coriſande anſwered careleſsly, as ſhe thought ſuch a common-place addreſs required no very ſerious attention; when the maſk contrived, in ſuch a way as made it impoſſible ſhe ſhould be offended, to turn the diſcourſe on the unfortunate Chevalier de St. Laurent.

"I knew him," ſaid he, "and I envied him the latter part of his deſtiny."

"An

"An extraordinary ſubject for envy," ſaid Coriſande.

"Ah! Mademoiſelle, he is ſurely to be envied who died in the dear aſſurance that the lovely Coriſande de Beauvilliers was not averſe to him in life, and that his death was wept by her."

"The death of any other man would have been equally wept—any other man whom I had ſeen blindly devote himſelf to deſtruction, and uſe *my* name as a pretence for his fatal raſhneſs. I do not know you, Monſieur, but I deſire to undeceive you. I gave no cauſe to the Chevalier de St. Laurent to act as he did."

"I wiſh to believe you," cried the maſk eagerly. "But, alas! Mademoiſelle, ſhould the daughter of the Count de Beauvilliers be *here*—here, in the Court of Queen Catharine? Should *ſhe* be the oſtenſible object of ſuch combats as we have lately witneſſed, while her father———" He heſitated.

The heart of Coriſande again bounded with the ſame emotions as had at firſt induced her to liſten to Guiſcarde. She remembered, indeed, how ill he had fulfilled the promiſes he had made her, and was afraid ſhe was again about to purſue a hope which always eluded her graſp: but her deſire to hear of her father conquered every fear of the conſequences of converſing with a ſtranger; and ſhe caught at the word "Father!"

"Do you know my father?" ſaid ſhe: "What were you about to ſay of him?"

"I am too young to have known your father, but he was the friend of mine—of that brave unhappy man, with whoſe fate *his* has in many inſtances too much ſimilitude. Grant heaven that in the cataſtrophe it may differ!"

"You ſpeak riddles, ſtranger! Is it to one whoſe looks are concealed, and the purport of whoſe words are myſteri-

ous—

ous—is it to ſuch a one I ought to give even a momentary confidence?"

"Were I to tell you who the unfortunate man is who thus ventures to addreſs you, would you give him pity for his own ſake, and attention for your own?"

Coriſande was more and more aſtoniſhed, and uneaſy at an addreſs ſo extraordinary, which was rendered more ſo by a certain peculiarity of manner, which did not for a moment allow her to ſuppoſe there was either deception or impertinence intended. Once more ſhe became perſuaded that an occaſion offered to hear of her father, and ſhe could not believe that any ſtep could be very wrong that was taken with that intention: therefore, on the ſtranger's obſerving to her that their conference was becoming remarkable, and that the King of Navarre was making his way through the ſurrounding crowd to ſpeak to her, ſhe was hurried into a promiſe

to meet this unknown perſon the following evening in an avenue of linden trees, in the moſt remote part of the gardens of the caſtle, and near an antient chapel ſeldom uſed. The ſtranger himſelf marked the place and the hour. "The courtiers," ſaid he, "will be at play in the King's apartments, the Queen ſhut up in her cabinet, and no one will be near that unfrequented ſpot but perhaps a prieſt, who may perform the evening ſervice to two or three of the ſuperannuated menial ſervants of the Court. When I tell you I dare not often mingle with the multitude who ſurround royalty, and that my beſt ſecurity is being unknown; yet, that as noble blood runs in my veins as the proudeſt in the Court circle can boaſt, you will gueſs that I alſo am one of the proſcribed, and judge whether I am not intereſted for the Count de Beauvilliers and his daughter." Coriſande had only time, trembling as ſhe ſpoke,

to

to repeat her assurance that she would hear what he had to say of her father in the place where only he could communicate it in safety. He left her, and mingled in the crowd.

The King of Navarre soon after came up to her, but his manner towards her was entirely changed. He sat down by her, and spoke to her rather with the considerate kindness of a brother than the admiration of a lover. He spoke to her of the misfortunes of her father and her family, protesting, that for a parent to be separated from *such* a daughter must be the heaviest of his distresses. The heart of Corisande thanked him, for he confirmed to her that her father lived; but she was unable to speak. The King proceeded to show that he had informed himself of her particular history. "When I first saw you," said he, "I believed that irresistible circumstances had enlisted the heiress of Beauvilliers among the ladies

attendant on the Queen, but I now underſtand how it happened that you at preſent make one of them; and believe me, Mademoiſelle, my admiration of your beauty is mingled with reverence and reſpect. Continue that noble conſciouſneſs of your own worth, which does you ſo much honour. Such animals as thoſe who have dared to pretend to you are utterly unworthy of you. Suffer not yourſelf to be thrown away upon any of them, beautiful Coriſande. The time may come when———" At this moment the Queen Mother, who had for ſome time been obſerving them, began to fear that Coriſande would more eaſily liſten to the King of Navarre than ſhe wiſhed; her intention was to engage him in a purſuit that ſhould occupy all his thoughts, and attach him to the Court for ſome time. The expreſſion of Coriſande's countenance, which ſhe thought announced approbation and confidence, did not therefore

fore pleaſe her. She aroſe to retire, and the conference was neceſſarily broken off.

Alone in her apartment, the events of the night occupied the thoughts of Coriſande. The dialogue ſhe had held with the ſtranger excited, however, the moſt lively intereſt. "What or who can he be?" ſhe inquired of herſelf as ſhe recollected all he had ſaid: "A Calviniſt, and certainly from his manners a perſon of rank, how can he be concealed in this place? He ſeems to take particular intereſt in my deſtiny; his father was the friend of mine; he is probably better informed as to the fate of the dear parent I lament than any perſon I have yet converſed with; I can incur no hazard in meeting ſuch a man, even though I do not know him. But Manon ſhall go with me." Manon was a young perſon whom ſhe had lately taken into her ſervice.

Having formed this reſolution, and ſatisfied herſelf as to its propriety, ſhe endeavoured to compoſe her ſpirits till the time came; and to collect herſelf as well as ſhe could, ſhe complained of indiſpoſition, and deſired leave to remain in her own room the whole day.

At length the hour came when the ſtranger had told her he ſhould expect her.

Half doubting whether ſhe ought not to recede, Coriſande ſet forth, leaning on the arm of her maid. It was in the month of February, and ſtill winter, yet with a faint promiſe of the diſtant ſpring. There was a ſharp wind, and night was already coming on; circumſtances which ſecured her from interruption. Her heart beat as ſhe approached the linden trees, and paſſed the old chapel, the door of which was open. She looked fearfully towards the place of aſſignation—the ſtranger was already

already waiting for her, He advanced to meet her. "You are not alone, Mademoiſelle," ſaid he: "ſuffer me to aſk of you to ſend your woman to ſome diſtance. Coriſande ordered Manon to retire, but not to loſe ſight of her. The ſtranger, whoſe countenance, though ſtill indiſtinctly ſeen, was that of a man of three or four-and-twenty, ſpoke thus:

"I will inform you in a few words who I am: you have undoubtedly heard of the unfortunate Count de Montgomeri*, who, after many years of

* Gabriel de Lorges, Count de Montgomeri, accidentally killed Henry the Second of France in a tournament held in a place near the Baſtille, on occaſion of the marriage of the King's ſiſter to the Duke of Savoy. Henry inſiſted on Montgomeri's accepting his defiance, and he wounded him mortally in the eye with a piece of a broken lance. Montgomeri fled to England, and did not return to his own country till it was involved in the civil wars

of exile and perſecution, was ſacrificed contrary to the faith of a treaty—ſacrificed for an involuntary crime, committed many years before, by the cruel and vindictive ſpirit of Catharine de Medicis."

"I have certainly heard much of him," replied Coriſande.

"I need not then enlarge on his character. He left a numerous family in indigence, ſome of them doomed to ſuffer perſecution and oppreſſion, even from infancy. I am the ſecond ſon of that unfortunate man. From twelve years old to the preſent moment I have been a wanderer: baniſhed and pro-

wars under Charles the Ninth, and was one of the defenders of Rouen in 1562, from whence, when all hope of effectual reſiſtance was loſt, he eſcaped by a daring act of reſolution. He was at length taken by the Marechal de Matignon, and, notwithſtanding the promiſe that had been given him that his life ſhould be ſpared, the inhuman and ſanguinary Catharine ordered him to be executed.

ſcribed I have ſometimes taken arms with my elder brother; ſometimes have, like a pilgrim, travelled through France to viſit, and, as far as I could, to protect and comfort three dear unhappy ſiſters who have found an aſylum in Switzerland. I will not detain your attention, Mademoiſelle, with the hiſtory of my unſettled life. It is now ſome months ſince circumſtances unneceſſary to relate led me to the Abbey and Fortreſs of Mount St. Michel and it was my fortune, by a ſingular accident, to know, that in that Caſtle, under the moſt rigorous confinement, lingers the brave, the eſtimable de Beauvilliers."

"My father!" exclaimed Coriſande; "Oh, heavens! you have ſeen him then—you have ſeen him, and are ſure that he lives? O tell me, I beſeech you then, Monſieur de Montgomeri—"

"Not Montgomeri," ſaid he; "that name muſt not be uttered in this domain: you alone, Mademoiſelle, know that

that the ſuppoſed Italian Infelici is the unhappy Floreſtan de Montgomeri.—But it is not of myſelf I ought to ſpeak, or of myſelf you would wiſh to hear.—I proceed then to relate the little I know that is to you more intereſting:

"By means, which former tranſactions put in my power, I obtained acceſs to the Count, vigilantly guarded as he is. A ſuffering friend of my father's, a brave and gallant officer languiſhing in ſuch a place, attached my attention and enſured my reverence. I even hazarded an attempt to enable him to eſcape. I did not then know that he had ſuch a daughter."

Coriſande thanked him with incoherent expreſſions of gratitude; ſuch intelligence as he gave her awakened all the tender and filial ſentiments ſhe had ever felt towards her father. Oh! were it poſſible for her to be admitted to ſee him—could ſhe once pronounce the name of father and receive his bleſſing,

ſhe

ſhe ſhould think no ſacrifice too great to obtain ſuch ſatisfaction:—might ſhe be allowed to ſhare his priſon, ſhe would cheerfully devote her life to him.

Such were the ſentiments of Coriſande; but it is not eaſy to deſcribe the earneſtneſs, the lively and animated manner in which they were uttered. Montgomeri looked at her with admiration, which every thing ſhe ſaid increaſed.

"Lovely and excellent Coriſande," ſaid he, "how enchanting is this tenderneſs! Gracious God! are the tyranny and oppreſſion that impriſon your father, and tear you from him, to be thought of without indignation, and even abhorrence, which ſhould arm every honeſt man againſt the perpetrators of crimes ſo deteſtable?—There are times," continued he in a ſtern and even fierce manner—"there are times when I could myſelf become an aſſaſſin—

aſſaſſin—when even murder, from which the heart recoils, ſeems to be dictated by virtue."

"For Heaven's ſake," cried Coriſande, "for Heaven's ſake recollect yourſelf. Circumſtanced as you are—"

"As I am," interrupted Montgomeri, "can I feel otherwiſe than I do?—But, pardon me, I am wrong. Your father—is there nothing you would wiſh to communicate to him?"

"Communicate? How? by what means? Alas! is he not a priſoner, ſhut out from all communication?"

"There *is* a poſſibility of my getting a meſſage conveyed to him, though of liberating him I own I deſpair."

"Oh! gallant and compaſſionate Montgomeri," cried Coriſande, "if to do that is in your power, might not you procure acceſs to him for me—for me, who would give up to confinement the reſt of my life, could I ſweeten the remainder of his?"

Montgomeri

Montgomeri repreſented to her how improbable, if not impoſſible, it was for her to eſcape from that ſplendid priſon—the Court, where her former attempt had placed her. He raiſed too another and more formidable objection in naming the probability of extreme danger to her father's life if ſhe ſhould be detected in ſuch an attempt. "At preſent," ſaid he, "the vengeance which even his death would not ſatisfy, but which ſought to ſatiate itſelf by inflicting long years of cheerleſs ſolitude within the walls of a priſon; that vengeance, as if glutted with its various victims, ſleeps; De Beauvilliers in his dungeon ſeems forgotten; but any attempt to eſcape on his part, or on yours to go to him, might awaken the dormant malice of his perſecutors, and perhaps furniſh them with an excuſe to do, what your refuſal of De Champignac is very likely to accelerate; not only

only may that excellent man end his life on a ſcaffold, but his eſtates may be ſeized, and———"

"Oh, do not raiſe all theſe difficulties," cried Coriſande; "true as they may be, I cannot bear to hear of them. As to myſelf, I am utterly indifferent what ſhall be my future fortune, could I but once be reſtored to him. They want only my eſtate. De Champignac, who had never ſeen me when his deteſted pretenſions began; De Champignac covets only that: let him take it—then perhaps my father may be permitted to leave his long confinement, and I will promiſe that neither of us ſhall appear before theſe people, nor ſhall even our diſtant complaints reproach them. Of them I am afraid, but not of poverty—not of any deſtiny they will allow me to ſhare with my father. I will go," continued ſhe, acquiring new courage and animation as

ſhe

ſhe ſpoke, "I will apply directly to the King—I will declare that I know my father is living—that we deſire nothing but to be allowed to go together into exile, and that I willingly abandon all claim to the property which they ſay is mine."

Montgomeri, however delighted with her courage and affection, here felt in his turn alarmed, and found it would be extremely difficult for him to appeaſe the ſpirit he had excited. He could have worſhipped the lovely indignant Coriſande, who appeared to him a being ſo much ſuperior to any of thoſe frivolous creatures he had uſually ſeen, as to be almoſt ſupernatural. But he knew her danger to have been great even before he confided to her that her father ſtill lived; and he ſaw with terror that her knowledge of it was likely to increaſe that danger. Himſelf an exile, and daring to appear at the Court of Henry the Second only while he

was

unknown and could paſs for an Italian, he had hazarded much in diſcloſing who he was; but his friendſhip for Beauvilliers, his apprehenſions as to what would be the deſtiny of his daughter, and, in truth, dread of ſeeing her in the arms of another, had impelled him to the ſtep he had taken, though he hardly knew to what end; for he dared not recommend to Coriſande to fly, unleſs he could have ſecured her ſafety in flight, and of any means to do that he had not allowed himſelf time to think: yet, what a temptation at this moment aſſailed him! Reſolute as Coriſande appeared to ſeek her father at all events, was it not poſſible for him to accompany and protect her in this evaſion? The means were his to ſpeak to De Beauvilliers; it was ſurely poſſible that he might gratify her by the ſame means, and what might not be his reward? Her gratitude, her eſteem, perhaps her love!—Heaven and earth! the mere

mere idea of obtaining her love made him forget every thing elſe; and with the ſophiſtry uſual when a man would perſuade himſelf he is doing right in following his own wiſhes, he ſaw every thing that was great and heroic in riſking his own life to ſave her from the ſnares which ſurrounded her, and placing her even *near* her impriſoned father, if he could not releaſe him. A thouſand other projects, equally delicious and romantic, now followed rapidly in his imagination, and all the dangers he had but a moment before repreſented in ſuch formidable colours to her mind, now wholly diſappeared from his own. To a man of two-and-twenty and a lover, nothing appeared impoſſible. Naturally eloquent, he was now not to be heard with ſafety by Coriſande, who, whenever her father was in queſtion, ſuffered her prudence to ſleep. Before they parted, Floreſtan had perſuaded himſelf that he could

conduct

conduct her in safety to Mount St. Michel; and Corisande had suffered herself to believe, that the imprudence of trusting so young a man, and one who was a stranger to her, was to be overlooked, when her only intention was to fulfil the purpose with which she had left Montrichard, and, escaping from the importunities she abhorred and the slavery she contemned, seek refuge in the prison of her father, which she believed it was possible for her to partake. Floreston asked only one day to digest the plan of her escape, and prepare every thing for its execution. Corisande consented to meet him again in the same place on the evening of that day, and hear what his schemes were, promising to raise no obstacles if they appeared feasible; and desiring their success as ardently as the enamoured Floreston, though her motives were yet purely those of filial affection.

IN

IN the mean time the intriguing genius of Catharine was not idle. She imagined it certain that the King of Navarre was too much faſcinated by the beauty of the fair De Beauvilliers to quit the place where ſhe was, or attend to any other purſuit than that of gaining the object of his paſſion. Henry, on his part, was far from being inſenſible of her attractions; but his generous feelings, his pity for her as a deſolate orphan, and his reſpect for the honour of her father, his old ſervant, forbade him to indulge any other ſentiments than thoſe of eſteem and compaſſion. He ſaw the dangers with which ſhe was ſurrounded, and was filled with indignation againſt Catharine for the unfeeling and unwomanly projects to which ſhe would ſacrifice ſo much innocence and lovelineſs. Unfortunately his character was ſuch, that, whatever was the purity of his intentions, any interference on his part would be im-

puted to very different deſigns, and he could not aſſume the character of the protector of Coriſandé but at the riſk of injuring her.

At length, after many plans formed and rejected, he determined to intereſt his ſiſter the Princeſs Catharine in the fate of this intereſting young creature. The Princeſs of Navarre was then at Pau, ſeldom having appeared at Court ſince the tragical death of her mother, and the maſſacre of the Hugonots.—Henry, who had now many reaſons for wiſhing his ſiſter to be near him, deſired her to remove to Limoges, then in poſſeſſion of the Calviniſts; and in full aſſurance of her compliance, he ſpoke immediately to Coriſande (for the Queen gave him every opportunity he could wiſh to converſe with her), and offered her, with the Princeſs Catharine, an aſylum ſuch as became her condition.

It was the night on which ſhe was

to

to meet Floreſtan, and her imagination had been buſied in picturing the comfort ſhe ſhould receive in beholding her father, after an abſence of ſo many miſerable years. With the ſanguine hope of youth and inexperience, all the intervening difficulties had been overlooked, and a growing partiality for Floreſtan de Montgomeri, of which ſhe was herſelf unconſcious, added to the charm which ſhe found in the idea of certainly ſeeing her long-lamented parent. If to ſatisfy her filial affection was delightful, it was ſtill more ſo to owe the power of doing it to Montgomeri. But the propoſal of the King of Navarre threatened to put an end to theſe viſions. Floreſtan had already given her a caution relative to that Prince, whom he deſcribed as honourable in every thing where his paſſion for beauty was not concerned.

Coriſande, though with as little vanity as ever belonged to one who had

been ſo fed with praiſe, was yet a woman. She was not faſcinated by the ſuppoſition of having attracted the admiration of a monarch; but ſhe did not believe that the intereſt he took in her fate could ariſe from any other motive than that admiration: yet, relying on the generoſity of his character, ſhe frankly told him, that, however flattering his majeſty's generous intentions were, ſhe had ſo great a deſire to ſee her father, that no other proſpect in the world could induce her to forego it.

Henry expreſſed his aſtoniſhment and his doubts whether it was poſſible to execute ſuch a ſcheme. Coriſande, conſcious of the propriety of her own intentions, and as little doubting thoſe of Montgomeri, told the King all that had paſſed, omitting only the name of him who had already ſeen De Beauvilliers in his priſon, and who thought he had the means of introducing her, if not to the ſight of her father, yet to be

be near and have communication with him.

Henry was aſtoniſhed at the temerity of one who had propoſed ſuch a ſcheme, as well as at the courage and perſeverance of Coriſande. He knew that the fate of De Beauvilliers had often depended by the fraileſt tenure, and that he would have periſhed long ſince, had not Catharine, or rather the King of France, feared for the lives of ſome Catholic priſoners of rank, detained at La Rochelle, who would have been executed the moment the death of De Beauvilliers ſhould be known. He had often attempted to negotiate for his releaſe, but had always been refuſed; and it was certain that he was one of the moſt obnoxious of the Calviniſt noblemen, on account of his former intrigues with England, and the ſupply of men and money he had more than once obtained from thence. It ſeemed, therefore, to the King of Navarre, as

if this young man, whoever he was, had laid a ſnare to poſſeſs himſelf of the daughter, and accelerate the deſtruction of the father; and, having once entertained this ſuſpicion, the heart of Henry glowed with indignation, and hardly could he prevail on himſelf to conceal it from Coriſande, who already began to repent of her unguarded ſincerity, and to entertain greater doubts than before, as to the motives that actuated the King of Navarre.

He tried in vain to prevail upon her to name this adventurer. Coriſande evaded even to give the ſlighteſt hint that could point out the perſon, and pleaded her promiſe ſolemnly given againſt betraying one who had truſted to her honour. Henry appeared to acquieſce, and they parted—neither well ſatisfied with the other, and Coriſande extremely diſſatisfied with herſelf.

In ſuch a Court, it was not difficult to

to find a perſon who would undertake whatever was directed by a ſuperior. The King of Navarre eaſily engaged Manon, the attendant on Coriſande, to betray her miſtreſs. He imagined that, in doing this, he was ſaving from inevitable deſtruction not only his faithful adherent, the impriſoned De Beauvilliers, but his innocent and intereſting daughter.

Coriſande, trembling to reflect on what ſhe had done, now haſtened to the appointment. Montgomeri was again there before her; and with an appearance of pleaſure which ſhe could not determine to cruſh, he related to her the plan he had formed for their eſcape and ſubſequent journey, which he thought could not fail. Having ſpoken at ſome length, he awaited Coriſande's anſwer, who faltered, heſitated, and was about to avow to him her imprudent confidence in the King

of Navarre, when a number of perſons ſuddenly iſſued from the chapel, and came directly towards the place where they were converſing. It was neceſſary to ſeparate; and Coriſande had only time to ſay ſhe would meet him in the morning at the hour and place appointed, though ſhe much doubted the poſſibility of their executing their projected flight. Montgomeri would hardly ſuffer himſelf to yield to the preſent danger; but Coriſande, aſſiſted by Manon, diſappeared among the trees, and, looking back, thought ſhe ſaw Montgomeri retire unmoleſted; while ſhe hurried to her apartment, and, with that unguarded truſt in every perſon of whom ſhe thought well, which was one of the ſtrong lines in her character, communicated to Manon what had paſſed, and her doubts and fears as to the event of what ſhe was about to undertake the next morning.

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The dawn of that morning hardly appeared, before Coriſande, who had not ſlept during the night, was alert and dreſſed. Her little preparations were made, and Manon was ready to attend her. The ſignal without, that had been agreed upon with Montgomeri, was given. They ſoftly deſcended by a private ſtaircaſe, and through a ſubterraneous paſſage which he had perfectly deſcribed; though Coriſande ſaw no occaſion for many of the precautions he had deſired her to uſe, ſince no ſentinel or other perſon was in the way; and they arrived ſlowly, on account of the darkneſs, but otherwiſe without accident, at an excavated arched way, made under one of the ramparts of earth, and then found themſelves without the Caſtle walls, and in the park. The ſignal was a ſecond time repeated: two men wrapt in long cloaks appeared on horſeback. They diſmounted; one lifted Coriſande on his horſe, and the

other took up Manon. Little was ſaid, and that little in whiſpers. Without any great exertion of ſpeed, they were ſoon at a conſiderable diſtance from Chambord.

They had not, however, been gone many minutes, when two other horſemen of exactly the ſame appearance came to the ſame place, and repeated the ſame ſignals. They waited—they rode forward, again gave the ſignals; but no anſwers were returned. The morning was now far advanced, and the guard, about to be relieved, would immediately paſs near and challenge them. They were far from being able to give an account of themſelves, and their longer ſtay appeared to be totally uſeleſs; they therefore rode away, and gave their employer, who anxiouſly waited for a meſſenger they had promiſed to ſend when they were ſafely in poſſeſſion of their prize, an account of their failure.

This

This employer was the King of Navarre himſelf, who, however vexed to believe the project he had meditated for Coriſande's ſecurity had failed, yet hoped to convince her, when he ſaw her, that in what he had done, or rather intended to do, he had conſulted only her intereſt and honour. He waited, therefore, till the hour when the Queen, ſurrounded by the ladies of her Court, admitted company. He entered among the firſt, and ſoon diſcerned, by whiſpers and half ſentences, that ſomething unuſual had happened. The moment he ſaw Catharine, ſhe reproached him with very little ceremony with having forgotten the reſpect due to her ſon, who was his ſovereign, as well as to herſelf, in having carried off a young lady immediately under their protection.

Conſcious that he had intended to do this from motives that would not have been believed, could he have avowed them, and aſtoniſhed and hurt to find

that Coriſande was really gone, Henry appeared ſo confuſed, and defended himſelf ſo ill againſt the bitter ſarcaſms of Catharine, that candour itſelf muſt have pronounced him guilty of the charge. He retired, and haſtened to the Captain of his own guard, to whoſe care he had the preceding night committed the cuſtody of a priſoner. "Nerac," cried the King in a very angry tone, "where is that man who was at my order taken laſt night and delivered to your care? and why have you ſuffered him to eſcape?"

Nerac aſſured him, that, if the man had made his eſcape, it muſt have been within a very few moments, as he had ſeen and converſed with him not many minutes before.

Henry, ſtill more aſtoniſhed, bade Nerac lead the way to the place where his priſoner was confined. As they went, he ſaid, "Is it poſſible then that this man has not broken his priſon? Have

Have you converſed with him? Whom does he pretend to be?"

"He is an Italian, Sire," replied Captain Nerac; "it is the young Italian who calls himſelf Infelici, and who, a few days before your majeſty joined the Court of the King of France, fought on the ſide of St. Laurent, who was killed by De Champignac."

This account was not calculated to put Henry in a better humour. "An Italian!" cried he; "does he ſay he is an Italian? But ſhow me to him."

The King of Navarre now entered a low room, extremely reſembling a priſon, under one of the cazernes where his guard were accuſtomed to paſs the night, and which was indeed uſed as a place of confinement for the ſoldiers who had committed any miſdemeanours. It was dark and dirty. The priſoner, who was ſitting in a dejected poſture, roſe on the entrance of the King. His commanding air and ſpirited countenance

ſurpriſed

ſurpriſed the monarch. But Henry was ſtill more ſurpriſed to ſee him there, ſince he had no doubt but that this was the ſame man with whom Coriſande had ſo raſhly engaged herſelf to go, and yet ſhe was now gone without him.

"You are the perſon," ſaid Henry, as ſoon as Nerac at his deſire had withdrawn, "who had undertaken, I think, to conduct Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers to her father?"

"I do not know," replied the priſoner, "how you, Sir, became ſo well acquainted with my intentions: that I had ſuch an intention I avow."

"And whom have you entruſted to execute it for you? Come, Sir, I muſt not be trifled with; I muſt inſiſt upon knowing inſtantly, which road, and under whoſe conduct, that young lady is gone?"

"Gone!" exclaimed Montgomeri in an agony, which convinced Henry more than a thouſand proteſtations;

"Gone!

"Gone! Heaven and earth! what do you mean to ſay?"

"I mean," ſaid Henry, "that the young lady is gone; and I aſk you, who probably contrived her flight, with whom?"

"The charge was too precious," ſaid Montgomeri, "to be entruſted to any but myſelf. If—No! I dare not truſt myſelf with the conjectures that crowd on my mind. Sir, if you are as I have ever believed—if you are what a King ought to be, the guardian and protector of innocence, loſe not a moment, ſend a party of your people after the ruffians that have taken her. Do more, Sir; releaſe me who have committed no crime, and whom it is injuſtice to detain, and ſuffer me, oh! ſuffer me to purſue them, and die if I cannot avenge her!"

Henry, moved at the lively expreſſion of paſſion, the force of which he was too well acquainted with, and involuntarily

tarily attracted by the courage and energy of the young man, then demanded his name; and when Montgomeri declared who he was, the generous monarch embraced him with affection; deplored the error he had been guilty of when he fancied he had preſerved Coriſande from the power of an Italian adventurer; and conſcious of the danger Montgomeri would incur where he was if his real name were known, he briefly agreed with him on what ſhould be ſaid to conceal it, directed his inſtant releaſe, and, declaring that he took the Sieur Infelici immediately into his ſervice, gave him a party of twenty choſen men, and the aſſiſtance of a young officer of undoubted bravery on whom he could depend; and within an hour after the King's firſt ſeeing him as a priſoner, Montgomeri was on the road which he imagined D'Herault had taken; for he had too much reaſon to

believe

believe that Coriſande had fallen into his hands, and would be compelled to become his wife.

It could not be De Champignac who had thus borne off the unhappy victim; for he was ſtill languiſhing of the wounds he had received ſix weeks before, and his recovery was extremely doubtful. Montgomeri knew too well from whence the blow came; but ſuch was the diſtracted ſtate of his mind, that he was incapable of judging how beſt to counteract it. He led the men, therefore, towards the uſual and moſt ſecure reſidence of D'Herault, a ſtrongly fortified caſtle on the borders of Perche, where he might ſecrete his prey againſt any thing but a regular ſiege. Montgomeri, unconſcious of every thing but the peril of her he loved, would have given the party as little repoſe as he was capable of taking himſelf; but the reſt of them, however brave or active, having no ſuch inducement, would not altogether forego

forego their repoſe; yet, by great exertion, they reached the Caſtle of Meillerive early on the ſecond day. They reached; it but it was only to increaſe the diſtraction of Montgomeri. As that province was then in tranquillity, only an ordinary guard was mounted, who, having had no orders to the contrary, admitted the two officers and three or four men, on being told they had commands for the Baron from Court.

The Baron, however, was not there, and Montgomeri felt his error in ſuppoſing that he would go where he would probably be ſo immediately ſought for. It was in vain he endeavoured to diſcover from the concierge of the Caſtle where his lord was. The anſwers he received preſently convinced him, not only that he was not at Meillerive, but that his people knew not where he was, as it was many weeks ſince he had viſited that houſe.

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The companion of Montgomeri now doubted the utility of purſuing him, and thought his orders from the King of Navarre went no further. Montgomeri, whoſe mind was now agitated even to a ſtate bordering on phrenſy, and unable to conceal what he felt even from D'Herault's people, was incapable of arguing with one to whom he could not communicate any portion of his impetuous feelings. He left Meillerive, therefore, alone, and determined in the deſpair of his heart to find Coriſande, wherever ſhe might be, or periſh in attempting to find her. That ſhe was loſt to him for ever he had now little doubt; but he could yet die before her, and to die was his only wiſh. The world had long been to him a ſcene of wretchedneſs. He had ſeen Coriſande, he had loved her, and he had been charmed by her confidence, and intoxicated with the hope of her love. She was now, he doubted not, the wife

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of another, and *he* had no longer any thing to do but to ſee her and die.

In this diſpoſition of mind he left his companions, without taking leave of them, and ſet out alone he knew not whither; for he now could leſs hope to trace the raviſher whom he ſought, than when firſt he began the purſuit.—D'Herault, who had vaſſals obedient to his will, and every other aſſiſtance, and who was remarkable for the oppoſite qualities of violence and cunning, had in all probability guarded againſt the reſcue of his priſoner. At that time every nobleman's houſe was a fortreſs, and every inconſiderable town had ſome ſort of defence, and was garriſoned either by Hugonots or by Catholics. D'Herault, therefore, who, without any principle, adhered to the latter becauſe it was the ſtrongeſt party, and the religion of the Court had in almoſt every Catholic houſe, every convent, and every ſmall village, the power to ſecrete

ſecrete and confine the captive Coriſande. And Floreſtan, who, the more he reflected on all this, became more hopeleſs, could hardly be ſaid to poſſeſs his ſenſes; as, unheeding whither he went, becauſe he could not determine whither he ought to go, he ſuffered his horſe to be his guide, and was only reminded by the laſſitude of the animal, that it was requiſite to give both that and himſelf ſome refreſhment.

At a ſmall town called Gouet, not far from Orleans, the neceſſities of both became too importunate to be reſiſted. Floreſtan had travelled forty* leagues with very little other repoſe than he could find in the granary or barn of ſome humble and remote farm, and little

* In certain novels of ſome reputation, the heroine, though extremely delicate, and ſo forth, lives not only *days* but *weeks* without food, and executes in that time journeys that would deſtroy twenty poſtboys and their horſes. This is indeed to carry the romantic *juſqu' à l'impoſſible.*

other

other food than milk or buckwheat bread*, given him by the charitable peaſants in the moſt unfrequented parts of the country—the greater part of them old men, who, no longer capable of bearing arms, had crept back to their cottages, deploring the loſs of a ſon or a nephew, and endeavouring to find among their native woods and rocks an aſylum for their gray heads, where the madneſs of religious warfare might no longer moleſt them.

Yet, of theſe, ſome were ſtill bigots to their prejudices; and with them, as they were for the moſt part Catholics, Montgomeri well knew it was unſafe to truſt himſelf, ſince the very ſuſpicion

* Buckwheat and rye were at this period the food of the peaſantry of France, who, from the ſtate of agriculture and the oppreſſions of their governors, added to the deſtructive conſequences of war, were in extreme indigence in the fineſt country in the world. Their condition was but little changed within the next two hundred years.

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of his being a Hugonot was ſufficient to make them forget that he was a man. But there were others who ſaw that he was unhappy, and relieved his wants without inquiring whither or why he was wandering; the deſpair in his looks betraying the anguiſh of his heart.

While her unhappy lover was thus loſt to all hope, and vainly ſearching yet dreading to find her, ſince there was every probability that he ſhould find her the wretched wife of the Baron d'Herault, what became of the unfortunate Coriſande?

With a heavy and foreboding heart, as if conſcious that what ſhe was about was not ſtrictly right, yet, that to delay it would plunge her into greater evils—while her fears were conquered by the hope of ſeeing her father, and her reliance on the honour and integrity of Montgomeri—Coriſande, attended by Manon, had left her apartment; and when every thing paſſed as ſhe had been

been taught to expect from the directions he had given her, when the two men were perceived within the covert of the trees he had pointed out to her, many of her apprehenſions had ſubſided, and ſhe was completely in the power of the horſemen, whom ſhe took for Montgomeri, before ſhe ſuſpected that it was not to *him* ſhe had entruſted herſelf.

It was neceſſary to proceed without noiſe, and Coriſande had no diſpoſition to talk; yet, when they were more than two miles from Chambord, and entering among rocky defiles, where no great ſpeed could be made, ſhe began to be ſurpriſed that her conductor continued ſo ſilent as not even to expreſs his joy that their plan had ſo far ſucceeded. He had a light helmet on without plumes, the beaver down; but now that it was broad day, Coriſande ſaw his eyes, and they had not the expreſſion, they were not the eyes of Montgomeri. It is not eaſy to deſcribe the

the ſenſation ſhe felt on that conviction. The man perceived what ſhe was too much terrified to expreſs; he ſaw that ſhe was ready to faint, and that it was no longer poſſible to carry on the deception, nor was it now material to him: he boldly, therefore, announced himſelf and his intentions. It was the Baron d'Herault.

His pride, already ſuffering from the former coldneſs and rejection of Coriſande, was irritated beyond all his power to conceal it, when ſhe reproached him with his ungenerous deceit, expreſſed unreſervedly her contempt of one who could ſo baſely contrive to trick her into his power, and reſolutely aſſured him that ſhe would die rather than ever conſent to belong to ſuch a man.

D'Herault had expected tears and faintings and complainings, and againſt thoſe uſual expreſſions of fear and reſentment he had been prepared; but

the firm tone in which Coriſande ſpoke diſappointed and provoked him. His haughty and arrogant ſpirit could not bear to be ſcorned by a mere girl; and forgetting the reſpect that was due to *her* for whom he affected to feel paſſion, he reproached her with her own art and duplicity, and added, that he had ſaved her from the poſſeſſion of a vagabond adventurer, on whom ſhe was about to throw herſelf away, unmindful of all ſhe owed to her rank and her honour. He ventured even to go further, and to tell her, that, abſolutely in his power as ſhe was, ſhe muſt not ſuppoſe that he would pay her the reſpect ſhe had ceaſed to feel for herſelf, unleſs he ſaw that ſhe had ſenſe enough to repent the error ſhe intended to have committed, and to be grateful to him who had interpoſed to prevent it.

This was not the way to conciliate or appeaſe the ſenſible and blameleſs Coriſande. A proud conſciouſneſs of her

her own value, a contempt for him who would, deſpite of herſelf, cheat or compel her to become his wife, and the conviction that ſhe could determine to die rather than ſubmit to diſhonour, all contributed to give her anſwer a degree of firmneſs, that more abaſhed her perſecutor than any expreſſions of womaniſh reſentment could have done. He ſunk for a while into ſullenneſs, and Coriſande was at leaſt relieved from the neceſſity of continuing the dialogue.

By this time they were at a conſiderable diſtance from Chambord, and the fatigue of their journey was felt by the horſes, as well as by thoſe who guided them. D'Herault, however, had taken his meaſures; and on entering that immenſe foreſt, which at that time overſhadowed a great part of the Orleanois, he was joined by a party of about ſeventy men, all well armed and well mounted, while their party was marked by their white ſcarfs and the white

croſſes in their hats. Soon afterwards they arrived at a ſort of fort or fortified barrack in the woods, where ſome others of the ſame deſcription appeared to receive them; and Coriſande was informed, that here ſhe was to paſs the night.

It was now that, retired to a ſmall room with Manon, and the fatigue of ſuch a mode of travelling being ſuſpended, the future appeared in all its horrors to Coriſande. She was the ſport of fortune, the victim of every one who thought her an object of their cupidity. If the injuſtice inflicted on her father, and the perfidy of thoſe who had promiſed to befriend her, had before made her feel averſe to her ſpecies, ſhe now dared not dwell on the apprehenſion, which, in deſpite of herſelf, intruded on her mind, that it was perhaps Montgomeri himſelf who had betrayed her into the power of D'Herault. The very ſuppoſition ſeemed to be the greateſt,

greateſt, the moſt inſupportable of all her diſtreſſes. If the countenance of Montgomeri concealed the heart of a traitor; if his apparent candour, bravery, and integrity were aſſumed only for the moſt cruel of all purpoſes, adieu for ever to all confidence in human nature! it were better to fly from a world where there was neither honour, honeſty, nor humanity to be found.

Nothing, however, could have raiſed this fearful phantom in the imagination of Coriſande, but the impoſſibility of gueſſing how D'Herault, who was not believed to be at Chambord at the time, ſhould have been acquainted, not only with the moment, but the very appearance and equipage in which Montgomeri was to convey her from thence. Of Manon ſhe had not the leaſt ſuſpicion, nor was it poſſible for her to imagine the various artifices which had been uſed to put D'Herault in poſſeſſion

of all the intelligence which was neceſſary to his deſigns.

Repulſed as D'Herault had been, the malignant and ſtormy paſſions had now a greater aſcendency over him than either his wiſh for the fortune, or his inclination for the perſon, of Coriſande; and he meditated on the moſt unjuſtifiable means to humble this proud and diſdainful girl, while it would have gratified him to have deſtroyed before her eyes the inſolent Italian adventurer, (for ſuch he believed Montgomeri to be) who had dared to attempt carrying her off, and for whom he doubted not her partiality, while his indignation and ſpleen hardly allowed him to think of it without giving the moſt extravagant marks of what he felt. D'Herault, however, did not think proper to provoke the indignation of the high-ſpirited Coriſande while they were yet on their way to the place where ſhe would be wholly

wholly in his power. Though the perſons by whom he was now ſurrounded were his vaſſals and dependants, he knew that they obeyed him rather through fear than love, and he thought the youth and beauty of Coriſande might create for her among them an intereſt which might be troubleſome, if not inimical to his deſigns. They had been aſſured her journey was voluntary, and that the neceſſity for ſecrecy and guards aroſe from the revived pretenſions of De Champignac, from whom, though ſhe had the greateſt averſion to him, ſhe had no other means of eſcaping.

To avoid the neceſſity of any converſation with D'Herault, Coriſande declared herſelf ſo much overcome with fatigue, that it was impoſſible ſhe could ſuſtain herſelf, or hope to be able to proceed the next morning, unleſs ſhe were ſuffered to take uninterrupted repoſe. D'Herault made no attempt to

diſturb her; and Manon, who was always ſilent and paſſive, and ſeemed to trouble herſelf very little with doubts as to what was to become of her miſtreſs, was ſoon in a quiet ſlumber on a mattreſs; while Coriſande vainly endeavoured to forget herſelf on another. The idea of Montgomeri, which ſhe had long cheriſhed with pleaſure till then unknown, now brought with it the moſt acute anguiſh ſhe had ever felt; it was mingled with the pain of reflecting, that, though ſhe knew where her father was, (if indeed ſhe had not even in that been deceived) ſtill ſhe was as little likely to ſee him as when ſhe was totally ignorant. Even at the very moment when ſhe had made this attempt, ſhe might have occaſioned the executioner to let fall the blow that had ſo long menaced the head of the unfortunate De Beauvilliers.

Wretched whichſoever way ſhe looked, the unhappy girl, in imploring the ſuccour

ſuccour of Heaven, could not help inquiring *why* ſhe was thus perſecuted, and why her father, the moſt excellent of men, was a ſuffering priſoner; he, who was as humane as he was brave, and whoſe life had paſſed in a courſe of domeſtic virtues or honourable actions. That Heaven would either deliver them both from their miſeries, or enable them to endure whatever might be inflicted, was, however, the conſoling reflection with which ſhe once more ſought ſleep. But the image of Montgomeri, and doubts of his attachment, of his honour, intervened, and the effects of her reaſoning were in a moment annihilated.

The morning came, and Coriſande, ſtill ſleepleſs, was already prepared for a continuation of what appeared an inevitable journey. But a change was to be made in the manner of her travelling. Snow had fallen during the night; the woods were yet paſſable, but

on more expoſed ground it had drifted: a litter was therefore contrived, into which Coriſande, who knew that reſiſtance would only excite inſult, entered with her ſervant, for it was capable of holding them both. Four mules, which belonged to ſome Spaniſh ſoldiers of the League, were harneſſed to it. D'Herault had aſſiſted her to get in, but almoſt without ſpeaking, and they began another day's journey, interrupted only by a ſecond ſullen repaſt at a more remote cabin in the woods. Coriſande, when again placed in the litter, could diſtinguiſh nothing; ſhe could only liſten to the noiſes without, and remarked, that ſome of her conductors were Spaniards—but none ſpoke much. They ſeemed to ſuffer from the cold and difficulties of the way. Night came on—the roads were rugged, and even mountainous—and ſhe could hear that the men, murmuring among themſelves, ſeemed to doubt whether

whether any place of ſafety and refreſhment was to be reached that night.

D'Herault himſelf was, as appeared by his voice, far from feeling, at this moment, that daring confidence in his valour and his reſources which he had before affected to diſplay. It was evident that his tone of high command was ſoftened into arguments to procure patience, and promiſes of reward to reſtore the failing reſolution of the people, particularly the Spaniards. Much that paſſed could not be diſtinguiſhed; but Coriſande heard enough to encourage ſome hopes, that mutiny among thoſe he had truſted might by ſome means or other procure her deliverance.—At length the converſation without, which ſhe collected only by ſnatches, convinced her that the followers of D'Herault had compelled him to adopt ſome reſolution contrary to his own wiſhes. Another half-hour brought them to the gates of a ſmall town, or

rather a fortified village. It was called Beuvron, and ſtood on an eminence at one extremity of the foreſt, and commanded an important paſs. It had changed its maſters three times in the courſe of the preſent war, and was now in poſſeſſion of the Catholics; but D'Herault was, for whatever reaſon, very unwilling to make it a place of temporary reſort, and the impoſſibility of his proceeding, added to the diſcontent of his people, could alone have compelled him to determine upon it.

The night, though it was now the end of February, was tempeſtuous, and the wind drove the ſnow, ſleet, and rain, in mingled torrents, on the heads of the party as they waited at the gates for admittance—which was not granted them till after a long parley, and frequent meſſages between D'Herault and the officer to whom the care of the town was committed on the part of the King. D'Herault, though known to be one of the fierceſt

fierceſt perſecutors of the Calviniſts, was conſidered as too much attached to the Guiſes, whoſe intrigues and power, long dreaded by the Court, had lately appeared more formidable than ever; and, conſequently, all the adherents of the Houſe of Lorrain were feared and hated by Catharine and her ſon.

Such accommodations, however, as the commandant of this little town could give were at length granted. D'Herault accounted his own way for the ſingular circumſtance of his having with him a young and beautiful woman; and the commander, who was called the Chevalier de Vieuxpont, directed that ſhe ſhould have every attention the ſituation would allow. Coriſande was, therefore, once more left to her repoſe, her ſervant only was admitted to the room; and being overcome by fatigue, ſhe ſlept (though ſtill without undreſſing herſelf) for the firſt time ſince the

the commencement of this enforced journey.

This repoſe, ſo neceſſary to her exhauſted ſpirits, ſhe had enjoyed ſome hours, when a ſudden and violent noiſe in the ſtreet ſtartled her. She aroſe, and liſtened with undeſcribable terror to the ſhrieks of women and furious threats of men, intermingled with the diſcharge of fire-arms and the claſhing of ſwords. "Kill, kill! ſpare none of them!" was uttered by a hoarſe and thundering voice immediately near the window of the room, and the clamour redoubled. Conſternation and terror deprived her for a moment of voice and motion, while her maid clung to her, ſhrieking and abſolutely frantic with terror. Doubts, however, of what all this might be owing to did not laſt long. D'Herault, accompanied by five or ſix men, ruſhed into the room. He was pale, and his eyes ſeemed ſtarting from their ſockets; the ſword he held as well

well as his clothes were daſhed and ſtained with blood. Neither ſpeaking firſt, nor anſwering the trembling Coriſande, he ſnatched her hand, threw his arms round her waiſt, and bore her, rather than led her, down ſtairs: but before they reached the entrance of the houſe it was filled by armed men; ſeveral ſhot were exchanged, and ſwords brandiſhed about. Two or three men fell dead at the foot of the ſtaircaſe, and others preſſed over their bodies to ſeize Coriſande, who ſhrunk back; while D'Herault, menacing and choked with fury, ſtruck at them, and endeavoured to defend her: but he received a piſtol ſhot in the head, and fell, dragging Coriſande with him, who was covered with his blood, and became for a moment ſenſeleſs through extremity of fear. She recovered herſelf, however, almoſt immediately, and found herſelf hurried down the ſtreet between two ſoldiers, whoſe mercy ſhe had now re-

collection

collection enough to implore with cries and ſhrieks. Very unavailing would all her efforts have been, but an officer of their own now appeared with a party of Calviniſts, for it was they who had by ſurpriſe taken poſſeſſion of the town. He came rapidly along, ſome perſons bearing torches with him, and calling aloud to the ſoldiers to ſpare the women, the infants, and the aged, conjuring them to remember that many in the town were Calviniſts. "We have the better," ſaid he. "Spare the lives of thoſe who yield—I command you to ſpare the helpleſs!" The ſoldiers who had ſeized Coriſande were by no means diſpoſed to ſubmit to this order, and, to eſcape from it, they dragged her acroſs the ſtreet; but the officer, having caught a glimpſe of them, flew after them with the rapidity of lightning, and, throwing himſelf before them, ordered them to ſtop. Coriſande faintly uttered, "Save me, oh! for the love of God!"—when,

quite

quite overcome with dread, ſhe ſunk down ſenſeleſs, and recovered to find herſelf in a room, and ſupported by Floreſtan de Montgomeri, who, while ſome women were aſſiſting to recover her, could not expreſs himſelf. So violent was the tumult of his mind, he could only repeat, "Thank God, ſhe is not wounded! that blood is not her own!"—while Coriſande, not yet able to articulate, recalled her natural preſence of mind, juſt able to keep her ſenſes from again forſaking her.

The tumult in the ſtreets had in ſome meaſure ſubſided. The Calviniſts were underſtood to be once more maſters of the place; but Montgomeri knew that the rage of the ſoldiers, ever renewed by the recollection of the maſſacre of St. Bartholomew, would never be appeaſed but by the authority of their leaders; and that, while he attended to the preſervation of Coriſande, he might occaſion the miſery or death of many unprotected

unprotected creatures. He felt his duty, and felt how dreadful was the combat between that and his love. To leave Coriſande was to expoſe her to evils which it diſtracted him but to think of. He liſtened—he fancied he heard ſhrieks and the cries of Quarter! Quarter! from the remoteſt part of the town. Coriſande ſaw his uneaſineſs. "Your preſence is required elſewhere, Sir," ſaid ſhe in a feeble voice; "do not on my account remain here."—"Sir!" repeated Floreſtan; "Sir! and not a word that you are glad to ſee me? Oh, Coriſande!——But this is no time——Go," ſaid he to one of the men who had accompanied him, "go to Captain Marteau; go—tell him——Yet, ſtay. Will you, Madam, allow me to conduct you to a place of greater ſecurity?"

"I will go," anſwered ſhe, "whereever you think I may be ſafe."—"Follow us, my friends," cried Montgomeri to ſeveral

ſeveral women and children who were collected in the ſame room; "I will protect you all to the beſt of my power; and, ſoldiers, have your matches ready."

Floreſtan then offered his arm to Coriſande, who accepted it trembling; nor could ſhe, on trial, ſupport herſelf without his further aſſiſtance; while every ſtep ſhe took added to her conſternation; for now, as the morning dawned, the ſtreets were ſeen ſtrewn with the dying and the dead, and the pavement was ſlippery with blood. The ſurpriſe had been ſo well conducted, that the Catholic ſoldiers were, for the moſt part, found unarmed, and thoſe who had made any reſiſtance did it under the diſadvantages of terror and darkneſs; while the Proteſtants, provoked and animated to vengeance by repeated acts of cruelty and treachery, had ſworn to give no quarter. Montgomeri, as his eyes wandered over this ſpectacle of horror, ſeemed to ſhudder at

at his own ſucceſs, and to exclaim, that war was the moſt terrible of all ſcourges that Heaven permits to deſtroy its wretched creatures. He looked at Coriſande; her fair and lovely countenance was polluted and diſfigured; her hair hung in diſorder over her face, and her cheeks and lips were as pallid as if ſhe were already dead. "I ſee her, however, once more," ſaid Montgomeri; "I behold her whoſe image has never been a moment abſent from my thoughts. But how and where is ſhe reſtored to me? Is ſhe ſtill that Coriſande I hoped to carry to the boſom of her unhappy father? Is ſhe not eſtranged—loſt? Has ſhe not been the prey as ſhe was in the power of a ruffian?"

Theſe reflections, and the miſery he every where ſaw around him, depreſſed the gallant heart of Floreſtan. Hardly could he ſpeak comfort to thoſe who, as he proceeded, continued to gather round

round him as their ſafeguard from parties who ſtill ſcoured the ſtreets; hardly could he exert his voice in command. At length he brought the affrighted troop to a church, where a ſtrong guard had been ſet over ſome of the women, old people, and children aſſembled there; his turn of duty he appeared to have ſucceſsfully executed; another officer was directed by the chief commander of the party to take the next round, and Montgomeri remained on guard with others; — while Coriſande was with many women received into the aſylum where they were to remain till the preſent tumult entirely ſubſided, and the town was ſecured againſt a repriſal from the Catholic party, which, it was now ſaid, might very ſoon be expected.

The melancholy light which now gleamed through the Gothic windows of this old edifice ſerved but to ſhow to Coriſande the miſery with which ſhe was ſurrounded; while her ears were ſhocked by

by the various expreſſions of deſpair that were on all ſides uttered by her wretched fellow ſufferers. Here ſtood a mother, who had eſcaped with one of her children, and diſtractedly inquired of thoſe about her if they had ſeen the reſt, or could give her any hopes of their ſafety, while thoſe to whom ſhe ſpoke, abſorbed in grief and fear for themſelves, or on account of thoſe dear to them, heeded her not. Here, on the pavement, ſat a young woman, who had ſeen her huſband killed before her eyes, and who could not weep over the half-famiſhed infant at her breaſt. There an older one uttered execrations againſt the monſters who had dragged away her daughter, and mocked at her agonies; and in another place a widow deplored her ſons ſlaughtered before her eyes, and called down the vengeance of every ſaint in Heaven on their murderers.

Some lay on the pavement, half inſenſible from terror; others raved wildly,

ly, and demanded to go out and ſeek for their friends. None knew Coriſande: occupied with their own ſufferings, none indeed noticed her; for the women who had at firſt given her ſome aſſiſtance, had availed themſelves of a ſafe-conduct to the church, where they hoped to meet either their miſſing children, or ſome other perſons whom they loved. Thoſe who were not diſappointed, thought only of the relief they had obtained; while others, who had ſuſtained their ſpirits by the hope that thoſe they ſought were among the numbers who had found a refuge in this aſylum, were, on finding their hopes diſappointed, driven to a ſtate of diſtraction.

The ſight of Manon would now have been the greateſt conſolation to Coriſande. But ſhe examined every face within her view in vain; Manon did not appear, nor did ſhe ever hear what became of her. The generous heart of Coriſande, who could not ſuſpect that the ſervant, who had

had profeſſed great attachment to her, was in fact the perſon who had betrayed her into the power of D'Herault, felt all the diſtreſſes of her preſent ſituation, aggravated by the fears ſhe entertained for the fate of this unfortunate girl.

Every moment as it paſſed increaſed the miſery to be undergone by the ſad group who were collected in this place. Some of the unhappy people were wounded. Cold and hunger, wearineſs and deſpair, were, more or leſs, ſuffered by all. Yet theſe were but a very trifling, a very inconſiderable part of the evils which only in one day the dæmon of war inflicts on the wretches whoſe miſerable deſtiny it is to be where his devaſtations are ſent forth. Yet war is ſaid to be the ordinance of Heaven; and the Scriptures are quoted in defence of the kings and lawgivers of the earth, who amuſe themſelves with this ſcourge, and exterminating whole

whole generations of men, call it glory!

While Coriſande ſuffered the ſight of miſery ſhe could not relieve, and ſhared it in her own perſon, Montgomeri was diſtracted by fears for her preſent ſafety, and ſtill more by the dread of what was to happen to her when he could no longer offer her the little protection he now had it in his power to afford her. A body of French Catholics, and a ſtill larger of Spaniards, were known to be on their march to the relief of Beuvron. Reſiſtance would be hopeleſs. The ſurviving partiſans of the League, whom the humanity of the Colonel de Montluc and his officers had ſpared, were more numerous than their conquerors; and for theſe laſt there was every thing to be apprehended, if the ſoldiers of the League ſhould reach the town before it could be put into a better ſtate of defence. De Montluc, equally brave

and ſkilful, was conſcious of this; and, after holding a ſhort conference with his officers, he determined to evacuate a poſt which, never worth the blood that had been ſpilt even in this laſt contention, he could not attempt to hold without hazarding a much greater loſs. The Colonel, however, gave the Calviniſts their choice, whether to remove under his eſcort to ſome place of greater ſafety, or to remain. About forty, who were either the moſt apprehenſive, or who thought themſelves the moſt obnoxious, determined to remove with the family and effects which the war had ſpared them, and the wretched group prepared for their departure; while Montgomeri with difficulty found an opportunity of ſpeaking to Coriſande alone.

The explanation which both ſo ardently wiſhed was ſoon made, and ſuch a weight of doubt and uneaſineſs removed from their minds, as greatly

greatly leſſened their ſenſe of preſent evil. Coriſande was ſtill the ſame whom Montgomeri had ſo fondly loved; or, rather, her character had attained greater value from the dignity and courage with which, even through the modeſt medium of her own narrative, it was eaſy to diſcover that ſhe had conducted herſelf. Coriſande, convinced not only of Montgomeri's honour but of his ardent attachment to her, reproached herſelf for having ever ſuffered a doubt of his integrity to croſs her mind; and, when the conſciouſneſs of having injured him was added to her former partiality towards him, it appeared to her that it was only juſtice to love him better than ever.

Thus diſpoſed, it was not poſſible that either could endure the thought of being again ſeparated; though Coriſande perſuaded herſelf, that, once near

her father, ſhe could diſmiſs Montgomeri to the career of honour which the ſtate of his party and his country called upon him to purſue. Montgomeri too believed that, were Coriſande once in a place of ſafety, he could return to execute the duties of a profeſſion, which, naturally brave as he was, and the ſon of one who was conſidered as the hero and victim of his time, he had been induced to embrace rather from circumſtances than from inclination; for his manly and ſenſible heart ſhrunk from the ſight of the miſery which he daily ſaw endured, and which he had often his ſhare in inflicting. He had thrown himſelf in deſpair into the troop of Colonel de Montluc, whom he had accidentally met while wandering in ſearch of Coriſande, deſirous of meeting death, ſince ſhe was loſt to him, and without the remoteſt expectation that, in conſequence of belonging to this

this party of men, he ſhould be led to ſuccour her for whom alone he deſired to live.

Their meeting was a good omen, that encouraged him to cheriſh the moſt flattering viſions for the future; and, though ſurrounded with difficulties and dangers, he fondly imagined that love would enable him to ſurmount them all.

It was this ſanguine hope that ſupported Coriſande through five days and nights of exceſſive fatigue, during which their ſmall party were conducted by about ninety of the King of Navarre's ſoldiers, through woods and unfrequented roads, towards Laval, a town on the banks of the river Mayenne, where the Hugonots had at that time one of their ſtrongeſt garriſons. Montgomeri, who never loſt ſight of his project relative to the priſon of De Beauvilliers, rejoiced that Coriſande thus approached nearer to it. He was

now only ſecond in the command of the ſoldiers who conducted this wandering company, and had very rarely an opportunity of converſing with his lovely charge. But, whenever thoſe opportunities did occur, the hopes with which he inſpired her that ſhe might eaſily reach Avranches, and obtain the interview ſhe had ſo long languiſhed for, together with the conviction ſhe felt of his affection, gave her courage to ſuſtain without murmuring all the perſonal inconveniences ſhe was liable to, and to follow the generous propenſities of her heart; which were, to aſſiſt thoſe of her fellow travellers, who, having young children with them, or labouring under ſickneſs, and with even fewer accommodations than ſhe had, ſuffered yet more in the courſe of their painful progreſs.

At length they reached Laval, and were received with as much hoſpitality as people could ſhow who were themſelves

ſelves often diſtreſſed for the means of their own ſubſiſtence. Coriſande was once more ſecured from the outrages or the ſtratagems from which ſhe had already ſuffered ſo ſeverely; and the hope encouraged by Montgomeri, of her now reaching the place of her father's impriſonment, would almoſt have obliterated the recollection of her paſt ſufferings, had it not been embittered by doubts whether it was poſſible for Montgomeri, under his preſent engagement, to conduct her thither; and without his protection on the way, and the means by which he knew how to obtain admiſſion to the priſon of Mount St. Michel, it was improbable, if not impoſſible, that ſhe could ever reach it.

IT fortunately happened, that a few days after the reception of the fugitives from Beuvron into the town of Laval, a meſſenger arrived from the Count de Caumartin, a Proteſtant Lord, who held the little town of Dinart for the Hugonots, to ſay, that an Engliſh ſhip, with volunteers, arms, and ammunition, was arrived at that port, and waited only for ſome officer of truſt to conduct them whitherſoever their ſervices might be required. The Chevalier d'Arlebois, who commanded the garriſon of Laval, heſitated not a moment in his choice of an officer: Floreſtan de Montgomeri, with whom he was well acquainted, had been in England, where his father had taken ſo active a part, and at a ſubſequent period himſelf had aſſiſted in obtaining ſupplies of men, money, and warlike ſtores for the uſe of the Proteſtanst of France. To Floreſtan, therefore, the Chevalier d'Arlebois immediately propoſed this journey; who undertook it with a degree

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of zeal which all his ſolicitude for the ſucceſs of the cauſe he was embarked in would not have produced, had it not afforded him an opportunity of conducting Coriſande, with an eſcort ſuch as he truſted would ſecure her ſafety, to St. Michel, very near to which his miſſion would of neceſſity lead him.

There were, however, many difficulties in the way. Coriſande, who conſidered it certain that ſhe ſhould have the comfort of ſeeing her father, had repulſed with ſome diſpleaſure the propoſal which, in one of their converſations, Floreſtan had ventured to make; that ſhe would, by giving him the title of her huſband, put an end for ever to the hopes of his rivals, and the malignant interpretation that the envious might give to her former or preſent conduct.

Whatever coldneſs Coriſande thought it neceſſary to throw into her refuſal, ſhe had undergone a ſevere ſtruggle

between her ſenſe of duty and her increaſing affection for her lover, before ſhe could reſolve to declare to him that he would extremely offend her if he ever renewed this propoſal till it could be ſanctioned by her father.

No expedient remained that Coriſande could think of, but that which ſhe had already adopted when ſhe left Montrichard eighteen months before—aſſuming the habit of a peaſant boy. However reluctantly ſhe adopted this diſguiſe, the remarks ſhe had made during her late enforced journey had convinced her it was the leaſt evil of the two. At that period, and indeed for the two following ages, ſuch metamorphoſes were in that country neither unuſual nor diſgraceful; yet, neceſſity only could have conquered the repugnance of Coriſande.

Floreſtan, who dared not propoſe it, was yet perſuaded of its utility, and readily undertook to provide the neceſſary

ceſſary diſguiſe for his lovely miſtreſs. It conſiſted of a gray habit, *de bure*, a ſort of coarſe cloth then worn by the peaſants, and a long cloak or capot of the ſame; to which Floreſtan added ſuch forms and additions as characterized the pilgrim; for, theſe he foreſaw would be abſolutely neceſſary to obtain admiſſion to the Abbey-church of St. Michel, which muſt be a preliminary ſtep to the introduction which he originally undertook to procure, not without ſufficient reaſon to flatter himſelf with ſucceſs.

As Coriſande was hardly diſtinguiſhed from the group with which ſhe had entered Laval, none were acquainted with her hiſtory or intereſted in her conduct; and ſhe was ſuffered unremarked to depart with the ſmall detachment which Montgomeri was to take with him. The journey was not long; and the reſpectful and vigilant attention of

her lover left her no other anxiety than for his ſafety when he ſhould leave her, and for her introduction to the priſon. Other doubts and fears, however, aſſailed her, which related neither to him nor herſelf. How many fatal accidents might not have befallen her father ſince ſhe was aſſured that he was confined in the dungeons of Mount St. Michel? It was very uſual for the Court to order the private execution of thoſe whom they thought it hazardous to expoſe on the ſcaffold; or, if the Count de Beauvilliers had eſcaped the private vengeance of the ſanguinary Catharine, it was but too probable that the miſeries of long confinement had before now put an end to his unhappy life.

Such were the melancholy forebodings with which Coriſande approached the coaſt. From a high ground, at the diſtance of ten miles, the ocean was perceived through the gloomy medium

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of a ſtormy evening; for the ſun, though diſtant and declining, touched its waves with a few lines of red light. The Bay of Avranches was imperfectly ſeen; and it was not till they approached very near that town, that an indiſtinct maſs, half obſcured by the ſhadows of evening and the ſea miſt that was riſing around it, was pointed out by Floreſtan as the rock on which the abbey and ſtate priſon of Mount St. Michel were ſituated.

It was not exactly in the way of this ſmall military party to ſtop at Avranches; but Floreſtan knew the delay of a few hours would occaſion no inconvenience to the ſervice, and diſcipline was not at that time ſuch as it has ſince very properly been made. Many of the troops who were in the ſervice of the Princes of Bourbon were volunteers, who were paid ſometimes, but oftener provided for themſelves; and almoſt

all

all the officers acted ſolely from zeal for the cauſe in which they were engaged, and not only ſupported their own expences, but frequently paid the men who fought under them.

Theſe circumſtances, and the credit and influence which the name of Montgomeri had among the Calviniſts in this part of Normandy, gave to Floreſtan a latitude he could not otherwiſe have taken. He informed the people with him that he ſhould quarter them for that evening at the little village of Genet, while he went himſelf to Avranches to tranſact an affair of importance, where it was not neceſſary for any other perſon than himſelf to appear.

Having ſeen his people diſpoſed of for the night, he quitted them; and with Coriſande, whoſe courage and ſtrength were ſupported by the near approach of certainty. Montgomeri proceeded to the ſhore without approaching Avranches. He

He had now conducted his charge to the beach. Coriſande had hardly ſpoken during their walk; and Floreſtan, who had taken her arm within his as ſoon as they were beyond obſervation, felt her tremble, and endeavoured to reaſſure her. She anſwered only a few words, broken by ſighs;—they expreſſed her anxiety for the fate of her father, of which ſhe was ſo ſoon to hear, and her tender reliance on him. Such, indeed, had been the conduct of Montgomeri ſince ſhe had been ſo entirely dependant on him, that her love and confidence were increaſed, and ſhe had indulged herſelf in imagining ſchemes of future felicity, which, could ſhe ſee her father releaſed, might be realiſed in another country, with a man whom he muſt approve, and to whom ſhe hoped they might both owe ſo much. As the moment, however, approached when all theſe dreams might aſſume a more

more probable form, or muſt be diſſolved for ever, the heart of Coriſande was ſo painfully agitated, that her limbs could not at that moment have longer ſuſtained her. They arrived on the margin of the ſea; the tide was not yet out, and it was neceſſary to wait till, by its retreat, the ſands became paſſable. The remains of a broken boat afforded them a ſeat. Coriſande ſeemed more than ever to feel her dependance on her lover, while, fixing her eyes on the waves that rolled between her and the priſon of her father, ſhe inquired of herſelf—Does then that half-ſeen gloomy building, tremendous even at this diſtance, ſtill contain the living De Beauvilliers? or, have not his ſorrows and his ſufferings conſigned him long ſince to the earth, covered by the Gothic cloiſters of the abbey?—Oh, my father! if thou art no longer of this world, what has thy wretched

daughter

daughter left in it?—Her heart anſwered, Only Montgomeri. She was conſcious that her fate depended on him, and reproached herſelf that any other affection ſhould occupy her thoughts while the fate of her father was yet unknown to her.

Theſe reflections kept Coriſande ſilent; and Montgomeri felt too much ſolicitude to be able to converſe. As the moment approached when an experiment ſo long meditated was to be made, he numbered all the probabilities that were againſt its ſucceſs, and trembled at the inquiry—what would become of Coriſande if it ſhould fail?

Even the immediate ſtep to be taken was perilous. The ſands, over which the paſſage muſt be made to Mount St. Michel, were often extremely unſafe, from their ſhifting with the tides; and Montgomeri had heard that perſons were frequently loſt, and that the experience of the guides themſelves did not always

always enſure their ſafety. He had frequently paſſed over alone and without accident from the very ſpot where he now ſtood; and meditating on the undertaking at a diſtance, it had appeared without riſk: but now that to hazard it was directly neceſſary, with her who was infinitely dearer to him than his own life, he looked at her with apprehenſion he could with difficulty conquer, and trembled, leſt he might be leading to death the being who could alone make his exiſtence tolerable.

His ſilence, and the tremulous hand which held hers, at length made Coriſande ſuſpect ſome part of his apprehenſions. She queſtioned him; and he owned not only his dread on her account of the paſſage over the ſands, but his apprehenſions leſt death ſhould have deprived him of the humble friend on whoſe aſſiſtance he had ſo confidently relied when they ſhould reach the rock. Coriſande, inſtead of being deterred by

theſe fears on the part of her lover, felt all her courage revive. "Is it for me only you fear, Montgomeri?" ſaid ſhe: "Do you recollect of how little value to myſelf my life has hitherto been, and wherefore ſhould I fear death? If it ſhould now overtake me, could it do ſo at a better time, unleſs I were ſure of meeting my father?—I ſhould die in attempting to execute what I have always conſidered as my firſt duty:—you would receive my laſt ſigh, and my laſt prayer would be that, if my father lives, you would adminiſter to him the comfort which Heaven denies to my affection." Her voice faltered.—Montgomeri interrupted her, ſaying in a low and earneſt tone, "Do you then think I would ſurvive you?"

Coriſande felt herſelf unable to anſwer him. "Let us not depreſs each other, my friend," cried ſhe, wiping away the tears that had filled her eyes; "rather let us ſee if it be not time to

begin

begin our half-aquatic journey. If the tide is ſufficiently low, can we attempt it too ſoon? And ſee, the moon riſes over the bay, as if to befriend us. That Providence which ſaved me from the power of D'Herault, and ſent you, Montgomeri, ſo unexpectedly to my protection—that Providence I will ſtill truſt to. I go not into peril to gratify any improper wiſh, and wherefore ſhould I fear the event?"

This heroiſm, while it increaſed the tender admiration of Montgomeri, did not appeaſe his ſolicitude: but it was no time to recede, or to betray fears for Coriſande which ſhe did not feel for herſelf. He went, therefore, to examine if the ſea had ſufficiently ebbed. It appeared that they might paſs, and there was therefore not a moment to loſe.

Montgomeri took her arm within his, and with a beating heart ſtepped forward from the ſhingles to the ſands beyond

beyond them. The night was now ſo calm that their ſlow ſteps on the wet ſurface were diſtinctly heard; nor did any other ſound mingle with the diſtant murmur of the retiring tide, than the ſhort ſhrill cry of ſome of thoſe ſea birds which feed on the ſmall ſhell-fiſh and ſand eels, when the water has ebbed, and which the moon was now high enough to guide to their prey; while her beams threw a long line of light on the watery ſands, making them appear as if ſtill covered with the ſea.

The wind had fallen, which was a fortunate circumſtance; for, had it ſet ſtrongly towards the ſouth, the returning waves would have overtaken the wanderers before they could have reached the rock. Coriſande, almoſt exhauſted with fatigue, could not walk faſt had it been ſafe to have done ſo: but Montgomeri, who dreaded the quickſands, which he knew were ſometimes fatal to paſſengers,

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led her ſlowly along, preceding her ſtep by ſtep, and convincing himſelf the footing was firm before he ſuffered her to follow him: ſo that their progreſs was extremely ſlow; and it was two hours after midnight before he ſaw with joy, chaſtiſed however by other fears, that Coriſande was in ſafety at the foot of the rock.

There it was neceſſary for her again to reſt, and there it was that Montgomeri explained to her more particularly than he had yet done his views and hopes as to the manner of obtaining for her preſent ſafety, and the means in future of ſeeing her father. He would not then inſiſt on the cruel neceſſity he ſhould be under of leaving her, becauſe he felt it to be almoſt impoſſible for him to obey the call of duty, till he was at leaſt ſure that ſhe would be in a place of ſecurity.

When the father of Floreſtan, the celebrated and unfortunate Count de Montgomeri,

Montgomeri, fortified himſelf in the Tombelaine, he made frequent excurſions to the coaſt, and once had nearly made himſelf maſter of the fort of Mount St. Michel, by bribing a monk to admit him by night to the abbey; who, however, treacherouſly betrayed him: and of thoſe brave men whom he had choſen from his little garriſon to accompany him in this hazardous enterpriſe, all thoſe who preceded him were ſilently diſpatched by the monk one by one as they aſcended the ſcaling ladder, while the Count de Montgomeri himſelf, with only two of his faithful adherents, diſcovered the ſnare juſt in time to eſcape from ſharing the ſame fate.

Among thoſe who were ſuppoſed to be thus baſely murdered, was a gentleman named D'Angers. But it happened that the wretch, whoſe poniard wounded him in three places, was either too feeble or too unſkilful to make any

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of theſe wounds mortal. D'Angers lay among his murdered aſſociates inſenſible, and covered with their blood and his own, till, in ſome hours, his recollection returning, he became conſcious of all the horrors of his ſituation, not doubting but that, when the monks came to remove the mangled bodies of their victims, they would finiſh their incomplete work and murder him. Though he was a brave man in the field, and had often honourably acquitted himſelf on ſervices of the greateſt danger, the terror inſpired by the preſent circumſtances diſordered his intellects; and, no longer able to reaſon on conſequences, he could think of no method of preſerving his life: but, amidſt the bleeding and ghaſtly group that ſurrounded him, he ſat with fixed eyes, as if petrified with the fear of death, yet unconſcious of its approach; for, when with the firſt dawn of morning, through the dim windows of the

gloomy

gloomy chamber a monk appeared, who came to diſpoſe the bodies for removal, D'Angers remained motionleſs; his clotted hair was ſtarting from his head, his eyes were fixed and glazed, and his whole appearance was ſo terrific, that the cloiſtered executor of others' orders, who was timid and eaſily alarmed, ſtarted in amazement from this fearful apparition, and it was not till ſome moments had paſſed, that he acquired preſence of mind enough to recollect that it was not a ſpectre, but one of Montgomeri's companions who had ſurvived his wounds.

This monk, brought up a Calviniſt till he was thirteen, had then, on loſing his father, been forced by his mother's relations to renounce the religion he had been taught, and to take the cowl. But, the convert of neceſſity rather than conviction, his heart had never aſſented to the vows his lips had pronounced, and ſuperſtition and bigotry had not

ſtifled the voice of conſcience or the feelings of nature. As ſoon, therefore, as he recollected himſelf, he beheld the wretched man before him with compaſſion, and felt an earneſt deſire to ſave his life.

This was difficult to effect: but the monk having once determined, found means to relieve him. The greateſt obſtacle aroſe from the imbecility of mind to which the unfortunate D'Angers was reduced, which threatened every moment to betray him, while, concealed in a cell behind the ſacriſty, of which the friendly monk had the care, he bound up his wounds, fed, and attended him with a zeal which grew warmer in proportion to the probable ſucceſs of his endeavours. At the expiration of a fortnight, D'Angers was able to follow his preſerver, in the middle of a dark night, to one of thoſe houſes which, forming the ſmall town of St. Michel, are ſcattered at the foot of the rock, where he was kindly received by a widow and her daughters,

penitent

penitents of the compaſſionate monk. It was long before the miſerable D'Angers acquired any degree of health, and his mind appeared never to regain its former tone. He had loſt, on the fatal evening of Montgomeri's attempt, his only brother; and he ſuppoſed that Montgomeri himſelf, to whoſe ſervice they had both been devoted from their childhood, had periſhed at the ſame time. Thus, alone in the world, having loſt the uſe of one of his arms, of which the ſinews had been cut when he was ſtabbed, and conſcious of no other ſentiment than that of gratitude towards thoſe who had ſnatched him from the jaws of death, D'Angers inſenſibly found himſelf attached to Robertine, the youngeſt of the daughters of his benevolent hoſteſs; and becoming indifferent to every other hope or expectation than that of paſſing the remainder of a ſtormy and unhappy life in peace, collecting the

wreck of his ſmall patrimony, and, marrying Robertine, became an inhabitant of Mount St. Michel, where his wife, with her mother, carried on a little commerce, which ſupported them in a humble way of life—with which D'Angers was, however, perfectly content; and long ſince weaned from the military ideas of his youth, and a convert to the Catholic religion, he retained nothing of his former ſelf but a lively affection for the memory of his patron and friend Montgomeri, and his family.

Some years paſſed before any occaſion had been given him to ſhow that he ſtill cheriſhed their memory; when Floreſtan, by his means, and by his having a communication with the inhabitants of the abbey and the ſtate priſon, had obtained admiſſion to De Beauvilliers. It was to the care of D'Angers he now intended to recommend Coriſande, and by his means he hoped

hoped ſhe would be enabled to ſee her father. But eighteen months had paſſed ſince he had occaſion to make the former trial of the faith and affection of D'Angers, and ſo many events inimical to his views might have happened within that time, that Floreſtan dared not carry her directly to the houſe. A rude projection of the rock again afforded ſhelter to the weary Coriſande; while Montgomeri, having related all this, reluctantly left her to ſeek the houſe of D'Angers, and aſſure himſelf of a welcome for her for whom only he was ſolicitous.

When he was gone, the ſenſations of Coriſande were thoſe of anxiety and fear. She dreaded leſt Montgomeri might perhaps be throwing himſelf into danger. An alteration of circumſtances, caprice, or neceſſity, might have changed D'Angers; and the moſt fatal conſequences might attend his putting himſelf in the power of a man whoſe character was ſo feeble

and fluctuating. The gloomy ſtillneſs of the night gave additional force to theſe melancholy reflections. Her ſeat was on a broken ſtone at the baſe of that immenſe rock on which the convent and caſtle ſtand. The low wind murmured among the cliffs, hollow and mournful, and brought from a diſtance the dull ripple of the riſing tide, of which the firſt ſhallow waves, juſt touched by the declining moon-beams, began to approach her. More than half an hour had paſſed; it appeared to Coriſande to have been half an age. Had not ſome miſchief befallen Montgomeri? If it had, it was to his zeal to gratify her that it would alone be owing; and where ſhould ſhe find courage to ſupport her if by her means any evil ſhould befall him? It was not, however, worth while to conſider what ſhould become of herſelf, becauſe it was an event which it would be impoſſible for her to ſurvive.

Almoſt

Almoſt another half-hour had crept along, and every moment her uneaſineſs became more inſupportable. A loud chime from the convent above now ſtartled her;—it was the matin bells calling the monks to prayer. The morning was then far advanced, and ſtill Montgomeri returned not. The bell ceaſed to echo among the cliffs, and again nothing was heard but the ſea and the wind. The pauſe was more fearful from having been broken. Steps, however, ſuddenly approached. Coriſande liſtened;—her heart beat, and her head became giddy. There were, ſhe thought, more footſteps than thoſe of one perſon: ſcarce did ſhe dare look towards the ſide from whence the ſound came:—it grew more diſtinct, however, and Montgomeri alone appeared. He took her trembling hand in his: "I have been long abſent," ſaid he, "but the tidings I am at length enabled to bring are of ſafety. Coriſande, my adored Coriſande,

ſande, will you not ſpeak to me?" A deep ſigh relieved her burſting heart; her words were weak and inarticulate; but in a few ſeconds, while Montgomeri fondly hung over her, ſhe ſhed tears, and was ſoon able to ſay, that ſhe thought ſhe could, with his aſſiſtance, attempt the almoſt perpendicular rock above them, and which it was, he told her, neceſſary for her to climb, by no very eaſy path, to avoid the notice of the ſentinels, who were always on the alert on the more open and acceſſible roads to the town.

Coriſande determined to collect all her reſolution; and, fatigued and almoſt exhauſted as ſhe was, her confidence in her lover, and the hope of ſoon arriving at the completion of what had ſo long been the object of her moſt ardent wiſhes, gave her force to proceed. By the aſſiſtance of Montgomeri, to whom the aſcending path was familiar, the height was conquered, and they arrived at a houſe

where

where a light was perceived. At a ſignal made by Montgomeri the door was opened, and they entered a ſmall room, where D'Angers received them. His pale countenance and emaciated form, and the quiet languor of his manner, were not calculated to revive the fainting ſpirits of Coriſande. There was a ſtillneſs, a cold reſignation about him, impreſſing an idea that he was not a man who would hazard any thing for another; and around him were all thoſe badges of ſuperſtition which mark the bigoted enthuſiaſt devoted to the ceremonies of a religion which, Coriſande had ſo much reaſon to know, often obliterated the feelings of humanity.

His wife ſoon made her appearance, and her reception of her gueſts was warmer, though it might not be more ſincere. She ſtill retained, with ſome remains of beauty, that buſtling vivacity which is often a characteriſtic of the

Norman women in middling life; and there was a cheerfulneſs and good humour about her, which, if it did not ſtrengthen the hopes of Coriſande as to the future, made the preſent moment more eaſy. Reſt was abſolutely neceſſary for her exhauſted frame. Montgomeri recommended her to her hoſteſs; and a few hours repoſe enabled her to prepare, with ſome degree of fortitude, for the painful ſeparation from Montgomeri, which was to happen in the morning.

The morning came but too ſoon; yet Montgomeri gave her ſuch aſſurances as to his hoſt, and explained ſo clearly the means by which he thought ſhe might ſee her father, and her preſent ſafety ſeemed ſo certain, that her courage, ever ſuperior to that of the generality of women, was revived, at leaſt as far as related to herſelf. For Montgomeri, however, all her fears were awakened, though he perſuaded her

her that the ſervice he was now upon was not at all dangerous, and gave her the moſt ſolemn aſſurances that he would return as ſoon as he had conducted the Engliſh auxiliaries to the place whither the King of Navarre had directed them. Coriſande, who was not ignorant that a ſoldier cannot always fulfil his private engagements, had many painful doubts as to his return; yet ſhe felt what he owed to honour, and to the excellent Prince into whoſe ſervice he had now entered (after being only occaſionally employed, and being long unknown to him); and the daughter of De Beauvilliers would have bluſhed to have detained the man ſhe loved from his duty, or to have tarniſhed his glory, which ſhe knew was dearer to him than life.

Coriſande, therefore, ſaw Montgomeri depart without expreſſing half ſhe felt. When his preſence no longer ſuſtained her, ſhe ſunk into deſpond-

ence: yet the ſolitude ſhe was now in ſoon became ſoothing to her who had ſo long been hurried about at the pleaſure of others, and had been compelled to go through all the wretched and wearifome routine of court etiquette*. Now, if ſhe was far from happy, there was none who queſtioned her wherefore her countenance was not dreſſed in ſmiles. She had the quiet poſſeſſion of a ſmall upper chamber, the windows of which, overlooking other houſes, com-

* I do not know where to find Engliſh phraſes that convey exactly the ſame meaning as theſe, otherwiſe I would not uſe thoſe of another language; for the affectation of doing ſo is a moſt diſguſting feature in every inferior modern publication. The newſpapers ſuffer no body to walk—they muſt *promenade*, (which, ſo uſed, is no word in any language). Nobody goes to breakfaſt—its is a *dejeuner:* a noiſy impertinent man is a *beau eſprit:* and a well-dreſſed woman, an *elegante*. We ſhall ſoon hear of a bar maid as a *limonadiere*; and a vendor of vegetables as a *legumier*.

manded

manded an extenſive ſea view; and D'Angers and his wife, having ſeen her in the morning, and deſired to know her wiſhes, which they complied with to the utmoſt of their power, always left her for the reſt of the day to amuſe herſelf in her own way; and no attention could have ſo well enabled her to conquer the effects of the fatigue ſhe had undergone, or reſiſt thoſe of the anxiety ſhe ſtill felt.

Some time had thus paſſed before any mention was made of the interview ſhe hoped to obtain with her father. Montgomeri had aſſured her that he was living, and ſtill in the ſtate priſon whoſe dark and maſſive walls were beneath thoſe of the abbey that frowned in the ſullen gloom of religious magnificence above. Montgomeri had recommended it to her not to ſpeak to D'Angers of De Beauvilliers till he himſelf began the converſation, and

Coriſande

Coriſande with difficulty ſtifled all expreſſions of impatience.

At length Madame D'Angers was deputed to inform her, that the time was come when, if ſhe had courage enough to truſt herſelf with perſons who alone could aſſiſt her, and would ſolemnly engage not to betray herſelf, or give the leaſt intimation of who ſhe was, ſhe might be obliged with a ſight of her father. Coriſande, trembling with variety of emotions, promiſed every thing they required of her; but ventured to aſk D'Angers, in a faltering voice, whether he would not himſelf accompany her. He coldly and ſomewhat ſternly anſwered, that it was impoſſible, and, were it otherwiſe, would be uſeleſs; adding, "You will recollect, Mademoiſelle, that he to whom I ſhall owe this favour, which I have ſolicited to gratify the Chevalier Floreſtan, knows not who you are. I am not

at

at liberty to tell you by what means I have obtained your admiſſion. The moſt neceſſary thing for you to know is, that it may coſt not only yourſelf, but thoſe who, at their own peril, have undertaken to oblige you, liberty, or life, if you ſhould commit the leaſt indiſcretion. You muſt, at ſeven o'clock this evening, Mademoiſelle, be ready to put on a dreſs with which my wife will furniſh you, and ſilently to follow a perſon who will be here at that hour. D'Angers then withdrew; and Coriſande ſat down to collect her ſpirits for the wiſhed-for yet dreaded interview.

THROUGH the obſcurity of a moonleſs evening, Coriſande, with a beating heart, followed a ſtrange figure in

in the dreſs of a lay-brother of a convent. He ſpoke not, till, having ſlowly proceeded through an arched gateway, he muttered a few words to a perſon who ſat within it, who delivered to him a number of great keys; after which he paſſed through a court ſurrounded by high buildings, and, entering a paved paſſage, knocked ſoftly at a door within it, which was opened by an old recollet, whoſe venerable figure, as ſhe could juſt diſtinguiſh it by the aid of a dark lantern which he held in his hand, greatly reaſſured the trembling Coriſande. He once turned his eyes towards her; but her face and figure were envelloped in a dark cloak, ſuch as pilgrims wear, and it ſeemed as if he had merely inquired by this ſlight look, whether the perſon before him anſwered the deſcription he had received. He took up a book which lay on a little table, and, with the lantern in his other hand, he became the guide whom Coriſande

ſande underſtood ſhe was to follow into the dark cloiſter which was now to be entered, and of which there appeared no end. The hollow ſound of her conductor's footſteps on the vaults beneath alone broke the ſilence that reigned in this dreary avenue, which, as its pavement hid their remains, and their memorials covered the walls, ſeemed to belong only to the dead.

The recollet arrived at a maſſy folding door: he applied one of the great keys, and it opened with a ſound that echoed through the long cloiſters and the immenſe aiſles of the cathedral, where Coriſande now found herſelf: it ſhut, and again loud echos reverberated from the tombs and chapels; then all became ſilent. The recollet, traverſing the body of the cathedral, opened the braſs gates that led into the choir, and advanced directly up to the high altar: then, turning to Coriſande, he ſaid in a low and ſolemn tone—

tone—"Daughter, before I proceed further, conſider here in this holy place, whether your reſolution is ſufficient to bear you through what you have undertaken. You are not to ſpeak—you are by no means to betray the ſlighteſt ſymptom of emotion. I alone know who you are. Should that ſecret be betrayed to others, you need not be told the conſequence. Daughter! ſwear here, before the ſaints and angels, and by our holy patron Saint Michael, that you will obſerve all the conditions I ſhall enjoin."

Coriſande tremulouſly anſwered—"Father, I ſwear!"

"It is well," ſaid the recollet, as he opened a wire grate which encloſed a ſhrine, where ſtood a figure in wood intended to repreſent St Michael. Behind this, concealed from all who were not in poſſeſſion of the ſecret, was a ſmall door which led into a very narrow paſſage, and from thence down a long

long flight of ſteep ſtone ſteps. It was one of the ſecret ways by which the monks had acceſs to the priſon chambers which are under the abbey.

As the moment drew near when Coriſande was to ſee her father, her agitation became ſo painful, that ſhe doubted whether ſhe could go through the interview. Silently, however, and ſcarce daring to relieve her heart by frequent and laborious reſpiration, ſhe followed through the gloomy labyrinth of arched ſtone paſſages, where the thickneſs of the air added to the difficulty with which ſhe ſupported herſelf. At length ſhe was in a great cavern-like room, not half of which was viſible by the light of the lantern, that, feebly throwing its beams into the dark gloom, ſerved only to ſhow in the midſt, one of thoſe cages of wood in which the tyrant Louis the Eleventh confined the wretched victims of deſpotic power,

power*, and of which Coriſande had frequently heard dreadful deſcriptions. She ſcarce dared to turn her eyes towards it: the very idea of ſeeing her father in ſuch a ſituation froze her blood, and ſhe could hardly breathe, till the recollet paſſed on and led her into another dark paſſage.

At the end of this there was a ſort of receſs, in which ſtood a pitcher of water and ſome kind of food. The monk directed Coriſande to take them; and then, to put her again upon her guard, he informed her in a low voice, that he was now about to enter the chamber of the impriſoned De Beauvilliers.

* This diabolical contrivance was uſed in the reign of Louis the Fourteenth, and ſome inſtances of its application have been of much later date. Madame de Genlis, I think, relates in ſome of her books, that *ſhe* cauſed one of her pupils, the unfortunate ſons of Philip d'Orleans, to begin the demolition of that at Mount St. Michel.

The

The heart of Coriſande throbbed with redoubled emotion. She caſt her eyes forward, and beheld, ſitting over the embers of a ſmall fire, a pale and emaciated figure, which, as ſhe more diſtinctly obſerved it, ſhe could hardly believe to be her father. He attempted to riſe on the entrance of the recollet, but ſeemed to have loſt the free uſe of his limbs; and ſupporting himſelf againſt a table that ſtood before him, he expreſſed in a tremulous voice his thanks for the kindneſs of the good father, and turned his eyes with an expreſſion of ſurpriſe on the ſtranger, whom he now firſt perceived. "It is a novice of our order," ſaid the monk: "I have obtained leave to have him with me to-night becauſe I was ill, and not very able to execute alone the offices of charity." A dialogue now enſued, by which it appeared, that, when others had failed, Father Denis, a monk celebrated for the converts he had made

made among the Calviniſts, had undertaken to add De Beauvilliers to the number of his penitents, and had now for near two years been in habits of occaſional acceſs to him; during which time, though he had obtained no change in his opinions, the excellent character of De Beauvilliers had made a friend of the prieſt, and had almoſt convinced him that a Hugonot, without renouncing his errors, might eſcape eternal perdition. The recollet, in his various attempts to ſhake the reſolution of the Count, had even given him hopes of liberty if he would declare himſelf a Catholic: but, diſdaining to purchaſe his freedom at the price of his honour, and feeling it to be impoſſible for him ever to be ſincere —or to refrain, ſhould it be again in his power, from taking up arms againſt thoſe who had deſtroyed his individual happineſs, while they had ſpread deſolation through his country—he would not

not diſſimulate, and rather endured imprisonment, the rigour of which had however been mitigated by the mediation of the recollet, and by the reſpect which the keeper of this ſtate priſon could not help feeling for his illuſtrious captive.

While De Beauvilliers now talked with the monk, little imagining who was a witneſs to his converſation, his daughter, who had retired to the end of the room, retraced in his pale and haggard face the features ſhe had learned to gaze on with affection and reverence from her earlieſt recollection. Though yet conſiderably under fifty, he appeared much older; for he had loſt his hair, ſave only a few gray locks on his temples, and ſorrow, rather than time had furrowed his ingenuous countenance, which yet expreſſed the character of his mind. He complained not. The monk, fearful of raiſing in the unknown viſitor emotions that might occaſion her

to

to betray herſelf, cautiouſly avoided every topic that might lead the priſoner to ſpeak of his family or his captivity. Yet it was but too evident that he ſuffered moſt ſeverely in his perſon from his long detention; and Coriſande with difficulty refrained from throwing herſelf on her knees before him, and bathing with her tears thoſe emaciated hands, which the damps and unwholeſome confinement for ſo many years ſeemed nearly to have crippled. The various thoughts that crowded on her mind during this converſation, would, had it laſted much longer, have conquered her courage; and ſhe would even then have betrayed herſelf, if the recollet, apprehenſive of what might happen, had not put an end to the ſcene by riſing to take his leave, which as he was about to do, De Beauvilliers thus addreſſed him:

"My friend, I have been more than uſually ill for three or four days; ſomething

thing ſeems to tell me that I ſhall not long need your kindneſs. In meditating on my departure from a world, which has to me been a ſojourn of trial and of ſuffering, I feel myſelf ready, nay deſirous, to leave it; yet I cannot forget that I *may* ſtill have a daughter, the heireſs, perhaps, of my ſorrows and afflictions. My wife, my ſon, the youngeſt of my girls, all are gone—all have miſerably periſhed! Were I ſure my lovely, my unhappy Coriſande had ſhared their fate, ſad as it is, I ſhould ſubmit; for death, the inevitable lot of all, is to ſome perſons even in early youth a bleſſing. The dead are beyond the reach of the calumniator and the oppreſſor; the dead have fulfilled their deſtiny, and can ſuffer no more: but, if my Coriſande, moſt lovely as ſhe promiſed to be, yet lives, with all that ſuſceptibility, with all that ſweetneſs, however guarded by underſtanding, good God! to what miſeries, to what

indignities, to what ſufferings may ſhe not have been expoſed! My friend, if, as you have charitably promiſed me when you were moved by the agonies of a father's heart, if you can obtain for me certain information of my loſt child, I will endeavour to endure the worſt like a man; and I will prepare for that hour I know muſt come, and which I feel will come ſoon."

The recollet attempted to reply; but the ſolemnity of this addreſs, conſcious as he was who heard it, deprived him of his uſual preſence of mind, and, before he had recovered it, all his fears were realiſed; for Coriſande, who had ſuſtained herſelf as long as ſhe could, fell totally ſenſeleſs on the floor.

Imagination may ſupply, what the pen would fail of deſcribing, the ſcene that now took place. The Count, with emotions to which words cannot do juſtice, diſcovered that it was his daughter whom his trembling and feeble hands

hands were attempting to aſſiſt, and Coriſande opened her eyes to find herſelf in the arms of her father.

The monk, to whoſe friendſhip and indulgence towards D'Angers this extraordinary meeting had been owing, was moved, by the mute but moſt affecting expreſſions of parental and filial love, even to tears; and when the feelings of the father and the daughter permitted them the uſe of ſpeech, the ſacred emotions of the human heart, which, dead as he was to the world, muſt have ſome effect even on the moſt callous, ſo far influenced the good prieſt, that, before he ſeparated Coriſande from her father, he was induced to promiſe that he would again hazard their meeting, with whatever riſk to himſelf. De Beauvilliers, as he preſſed his hand in ſpeechleſs gratitude, ſhed the firſt tears that had for many years fallen from his eyes; for deſpair had withered his heart, and it was long

ſince a ſettled reſignation, interrupted only by his fears for Coriſande, had aſſumed with him the ſemblance of ſtoical fortitude. It was not till after a ſevere ſtruggle that Coriſande could determine to quit her father; and he again and again implored the recollet to repeat the promiſe, which alone would enable him to ſuſtain his exiſtence; when, after fondly folding his Coriſande to his heart, he ſaw the door of his priſon cloſe upon him, and ſhut out this invaluable, this newly found treaſure, on which he doted with more ardent affection than if he had never loſt it. In Coriſande was centred all the love he had borne to his children and their mother, all the hope that yet remained to him upon earth; and when the object thus tenderly conſidered ſeemed to be adorned by nature with every perfection of mind and perſon, and had given ſo heroic a proof of her attachment to a father ſo long divided

from

from her, the feelings of that father naturally aroſe to ſomething like adoration. They were indeed ſo painful, that to ſubdue and quiet the tumult of his mind De Beauvilliers had recourſe to prayer; and offering to Heaven his gratitude for the new-found bleſſing, and earneſtly imploring continued protection of his beloved Coriſande, the exceſſive agitation of his ſpirits gradually ſubſided, and he lay down on the ſad pallet, where he had paſſed ſo many tedious nights of anguiſh, with ſenſations of happineſs ſuch as he never imagined he ſhould experience again.

CORISANDE, ſafely conducted by the good recollet to the houſe of

D'Angers, and once more in her own little room, could hardly perſuade herſelf that ſhe had not been in a dream; and ſuch was the delight with which ſhe recollected every word, every look of her father, that ſhe for a while forgot how little probability there was that ſhe could often be admitted to ſee him, and that he was ſtill a priſoner, his very life depending on the caprice of a number of perſons, who were neither guided by reaſon nor ſenſible of humanity. The recollet, unlike many of his profeſſion, had a heart neither vitiated or hardened; he knew himſelf ſubject to human frailties, and cheriſhed the human feelings of benevolence and pity; and the interview between De Beauvilliers and his daughter, in which he had dreaded only that they ſhould diſcover each other, had ſo affected him, that he determined, at whatever riſk, to indulge them in frequent meetings, as long as the concierge

cierge of the ſtate priſon allowed him to viſit the captive at any hour he pleaſed. And ſuch was the veneration in which the keeper and almoſt every officer in the caſtle held this good man, that his requeſt was as a law to them; and they truſted him implicitly to viſit the ſick and the mourner, of whom they had often but too many under their care. Real benevolence and urbanity muſt gain acceſs to every heart; and Father Denis, the recollet, had even made ſome converts from the Calviniſt perſuaſion by the idea his conduct and character were calculated to impreſs, that the religion of ſo good a man muſt be the true religion. Coriſande ſoon ſaw him again, and heard with indeſcribable joy, that he would in a few days ſuffer her to accompany him, when he was to have acceſs to the Count de Beauvilliers.

Thus gratified in the firſt wiſh of her

heart, the thoughts of Coriſande fled with new ſenſations of affection and gratitude towards Floreſtan de Montgomeri, to whom ſhe owed this ſatisfaction, and of whom her father had ſpoken in terms of praiſe and regard, when, in his eagerneſs to hear, and hers to relate, the ſtrange events which had happened to her, ſhe had ſpoken of Floreſtan as her deliverer, and as having been her guide towards St. Michel. Coriſande imagined that her father thought of Floreſtan as he deſerved; there was peculiar energy in his voice and manner when he ſpoke of him, and, fondly recalling all he had ſaid, ſhe ventured to carry her mind beyond the clouds that now hung over their deſtiny, and to indulge in a thouſand delicious dreams of future happineſs.

At her ſecond interview with her father, the recollet left them ſome hours together;

together; and De Beauvilliers became perſuaded, that, through his interpoſition, the keeper of the priſon connived at this indulgence. Coriſande now paſſed whole hours, and at length whole days, unqueſtioned there. Her father almoſt ceaſed to remember that he was in confinement: and had he not occaſionally heard doubts of the final intentions of the King, or rather of Catharine, as to the lives of thoſe Hugonot lords who had hitherto been ſpared —or could Coriſande have perſuaded herſelf that her father's health, however he had revived on firſt ſeeing her, was not ſlowly declining—ſhe would have had no other wiſh than for Montgomeri's return, and to ſhare with him the office of ſweetening the life of De Beauvilliers.

The Count very frequently ſpoke of him, dwelling with enthuſiaſtic affection on his virtues; but as time wore away,

and near a month had elapſed without any intelligence having been received of him, the father and the daughter became equally uneaſy. The Count, now well aſſured of the ſtate of his daughter's mind, feared to inquire after him, leſt it ſhould add to her pain; while Coriſande endeavoured to diſcover how her father accounted for his abſence, without venturing wholly to diſcloſe the increaſing anxiety that preyed on her heart.

This uneaſy ſuſpenſe was much aggravated by intelligence that Coriſande now collected from her hoſt. The Hugonots were again in conſiderable force; and the intrigues of the Queen Mother had collected a formidable body of Spaniards and Flemings, under the command of the Prince of Parma, a general more able than any to whom the affairs of the League had been entruſted. A deciſive battle was therefore hourly expected;

expected; and the King, dreading equally the Proteſtants and the Guiſes, was ſo undecided, and acted ſo feebly and irreſolutely, that both parties gave way to the greateſt exceſſes; and in the daily ſkirmiſhes between them, blood was uſeleſsly ſhed, and their mutual animoſity occaſioned the moſt ſhocking atrocities. This intelligence failed not to alarm Coriſande: for Montgomeri, of whoſe daring courage ſhe was too certain, and whoſe prudence ſhe already doubted. Every day as it paſſed brought her ſome new cauſe of alarm. Vague and exaggerated accounts alone reached the melancholy abode of D'Angers, whoſe gloomy ſuperſtition ſeemed wholly to abſorb every other ſentiment than affection for the family of Montgomeri; and even that Coriſande thought became leſs active.

The apprehenſions that now tormented her had become almoſt inſupportable, when Floreſtan ſuddenly appeared.

The eagerneſs of his manner, and the diſtreſs expreſſed on his countenance, diſappeared, as, converſing with Coriſande, he found her happier than ſhe had imagined it poſſible ſhe could ever become, and acknowledged that to him alone ſhe owed the ſatisfaction ſhe enjoyed. He was allowed to accompany her to her father, and De Beauvilliers embraced them both with more pleaſure than his heart had felt ſince his departure from Montrichard. Montgomeri, however, ſuffered not the tranſient delight he felt to deter him too long from explaining, at leaſt to the Count, the danger which now menaced him, though he could hardly reſolve to blight the hopes of happineſs which illuminated the eyes and glowed on the cheeks of Coriſande.

Alone with her father, Floreſtan could no longer conceal the intelligence he brought. The flames of civil war were raging with greater violence than ever.

ever. The priſons were filled with Hugonots, and ſeveral had ſuffered death; while they retaliated on all the Catholics that fell into their hands. The King of France, wearied by the perpetual contention to which his mother's crooked politics expoſed him, and dreading the increaſing power of the Guiſes, was trying to negotiate with the King of Navarre: yet, after the perfidy that had marked the conduct of his brother, and the weakneſs and verſatility of his own, no confidence could be placed in his advances; and they ſerved only to irritate the pride and provoke the inſolence of the Duke of Guiſe, to whom the Pariſians adhered with ſo much zeal, that he was likely to ſhake Henry on his throne.

There was but too much probability that De Beauvilliers would no longer be ſuffered to enjoy the indulgences which had lately ſoftened the ſufferings of impriſonment. Floreſtan, indeed,

was

was under the greateſt apprehenſions for his life; and he repreſented to him all the grounds he had for theſe fears, and pointed out the only probability of ſecurity to him, which was, to eſcape to England—

"In England," ſaid Montgomeri, "you will be ſafe. Remember, dear Sir, that your friend, my unhappy father, would now have been living had he remained there. It is in your power to eſcape. Fly, I beſeech you—conſent to ſave yourſelf and your daughter, whoſe life depends on yours."

De Beauvilliers was ſurpriſed at the impetuoſity of his young friend. "Is it in my power to eſcape, my dear Floreſtan? Tell me, I beſeech you, how?"

Floreſtan then brought to his recollection the place where his father the Count de Montgomeri would have aſcended; having come to the foot of the caſtle wall, in a dark night, with a ſelect

a ſelect number of brave followers, by whoſe aſſiſtance he would have become maſter of the caſtle, had they not been treacherouſly betrayed by a monk, who ſilently ſtabbed them one by one as they reached the window at which he waited for them, under the promiſe of introducing them into the fortreſs.

"In an obſcure place," ſaid Montgomeri, "to which you may have acceſs from theſe apartments, there are, as I have lately learned, the inſtruments by which this exploit was to be performed. To deſcend with the neceſſary precautions, will be much leſs hazardous than it was to ſcale the wall within the narrow cavity which opens to the ſea. There I will undertake to be with a boat, which ſhall convey us to a veſſel without the Bay, and in a few hours you will find yourſelf ſafely in England."

"And Coriſande——" ſaid De Beauvilliers.

"Cori-

"Coriſande!" replied Montgomeri: "Does not ſhe form a part in every plan I could dream of, or you would adopt? Would you not truſt me to conduct Coriſande to England?"

"Yes, my friend, I *would* entruſt you with her; and you are, perhaps, the only man in the world in whom I would place ſo much confidence. But I know your high ſenſe of honour, and I know that to you I owe the only hours of comfort that I have enjoyed for many years." Encouraged by a declaration ſo flattering, Floreſtan ventured to name his paſſion and his hopes; yet, conſcious that in his own precarious ſituation, and while he had himſelf endeavoured to repreſent that the life of De Beauvilliers himſelf was in danger, it was no time to ſpeak of marriage, he rather endeavoured to ſecure the future than his immediate conſent. De Beauvilliers, who had gueſſed at the ſtate of his affections, was ſo far from diſapproving of

of them, that he ſaid, "My dear Floreſtan, you have anticipated my wiſhes. If the axe, which is I know ſuſpended but by a thread, ſhould fall, to whom can I confide my lovely orphan girl but to you? to whom ſhould I wiſh to entruſt the ſole treaſure of my heart, but to him who knows its value?—Let me give her to you even now, before we hear more of projects of eſcape. To-morrow, if you can obtain her conſent, I will give you my tendereſt bleſſing, and you will find a Calviniſt prieſt who ſhall join your hands."

Floreſtan, tranſported with joy, could with difficulty expreſs his thanks. He flew to Coriſande, who with her uſual frankneſs aſſured him, that, as her heart had long been his, ſhe ſhould without reluctance obey her father; yet, that ſhe ſhould conſider his continued impriſonment as the greateſt diminution of her happineſs. Floreſtan had expreſſed to her his extreme ſolicitude for the releaſe

releaſe of De Beauvilliers, yet without telling half the reaſon he had to dread the fatal termination of his longer impriſonment.

Only another interview with her father intervened before Coriſande became the wife of Montgomeri. Thus ſecure of her perſon and her affection, he ventured to tell her the various cauſes he had of apprehenſion; and, however unwilling to alarm her even in the firſt days of their marriage, he knew the neceſſity there might ſoon be for her to exert all her fortitude; and he knew that her reaſon and courage would enable her to make every effort to ward off the evils that might be apprehended, if the worſt his fears had foreſeen ſhould really happen to De Beauvilliers.

The danger loſt half its terrors, if not its magnitude, while he diveſted it as much as poſſible of that myſtery which adds ſo greatly to apprehenſion. He

deſcribed

deſcribed the various views of the contending parties, and pointed out what might be apprehended from the fluctuating politics of one, and the oppreſſions of the other. Himſelf proſcribed, and likely to be more dangerouſly circumſtanced than ever, he urged Coriſande to uſe all her power over her father to perſuade him immediately to conſent to eſcape by the means he had propoſed; and he then informed Coriſande, that his late abſence had been lengthened by the preparations he had made for their evaſion and concealment in England.

To obtain her father's immediate concurrence was the firſt object of Coriſande. After this conference, ſhe waited impatiently for the hour when ſhe could be admitted to an interview with the Count. To her earneſt exhortation that he would think ſeriouſly of the propoſal made him by Floreſtan, and

embrace

embrace the occaſion offered him to eſcape, on which he had hitherto evaded to decide, he thus anſwered:

"There is only one thing, my beloved Coriſande, dearer to me than thou art—it is my honour. The concierge in whoſe cuſtody I have been theſe laſt ſeven months, unlike him whom he ſucceeded, has ſoftened my captivity by every means in his power; he has allowed me, as far as he could, the conſolations of friendſhip and ſociety, and above all, the comfort of ſeeing thee; for, though he has not himſelf appeared in it, without his conſent it could not have been done.

"In all this indulgence, of which I might long ſince have availed myſelf for my eſcape, he has truſted to the honour which he knows *ought*, and which he believes *does*, inhabit the breaſt of a gentleman. Is it De Beauvilliers, my Coriſande, who, at the end of

of a life of unblemiſhed probity, ſhall violate this ſacred principle? Shall he requite the kindneſs of this man by bringing on him puniſhment, and perhaps impriſonment? He, this jailer, in a manner of life ſo degrading, and ſo injurious to the beſt feelings of the heart, has ſhown himſelf ſuſceptible of kindneſs; ſhall De Beauvilliers ſo far forget all that is juſt and noble, as to repay him with ingratitude?—Never. Whatever danger may attend my ſtay, here I will remain till I can implicate no one in my eſcape; above all, a man to whom I owe, if not my exiſtence, that my exiſtence has been ſupportable.

To theſe arguments Coriſande could anſwer little. For ſome moments ſhe felt aſſured that ſo much goodneſs and integrity muſt be the care of Heaven; then dreading the reality of all the evils Floreſtan had repreſented to her, and dungeons, chains, famine, and death being preſent to her imagination, ſhe wept

wept in ſilent anguiſh a reſolution which it appeared impoſſible for her to change.

Again, however, ſhe attempted to move her father by repreſenting her own ſorrow and danger. He replied, that no ſorrow was inſupportable but that which attended the conſcioufneſs of guilt; and that ſhe was now in the protection of a man of ſuch bravery and honour, that his fears for her were at an end. "If," added he, "I were to eſcape, and know afterwards that this concierge, who has been my friend in the hour of adverſity, had periſhed for me —periſhed by an act of treachery on my part—never, my Coriſande, never would even the ſight of your happineſs, dear as it is to my heart, conſole me. A few years of life would, on the terms I ſhould then hold it, be too dearly purchaſed."

Thus repulſed, yet feeling veneration for thoſe high principles of honour to

which

which the refuſal was owing, Coriſande aroſe to bid adieu to her father for the night; but, her ſpirits being overcome by the intelligence ſhe had received from Floreſtan, and by the impoſſibility of prevailing on the Count, ſhe was ſo depreſſed, that it was with difficulty ſhe found reſolution enough not to betray, by cries and tears, the ſad preſentiment that hung on her heart, that ſhe was bidding farewel for ever to a parent ſo lately found, and ſo affectionately loved.

She ſucceeded ill in her endeavours to conceal the terrors that agitated her boſom; and even the fortitude of De Beauvilliers was ſo ſhaken, that, when at length he ſaw her depart, he liſtened to her footſteps, which the maſſive door that ſhut after her prevented him from hearing; and when the dead ſilence returned, in which he had paſſed ſo many melancholy hours before the preſence of his daughter reanimated his

almoſt

almoſt extinguiſhed life, he felt as if he had again loſt all that he yet poſſeſſed in the world: and annihilation would have been leſs dreadful to his imagination.

Coriſande, on her part, retired in yet greater uneaſineſs. Montgomeri was abſent only for a few hours: he returned late, and fatigued, but endeavoured to reaſſure his wife, and to perſuade her that the next day ſhe might be able to prevail on her father.

The next day, however, put an end to their lingering hopes, and the unhappy Coriſande had need of all the tender ſolicitude of Montgomeri to prevent her ſinking under the anguiſh which aſſailed her. An expreſs had arrived during the night at the Mont St. Michel, directing the preſent concierge of the caſtle to be removed, the priſoners to be more rigorouſly confined, and no perſon whatever to be admitted to ſee them. At the ſame time the new keeper made

made his appearance, and was recognised as a wretch who had formerly been one of the turnkeys, and had been dismissed for brutality and dishonesty. All this D'Angers, to whose knowledge it immediately came, knew; and, in that desponding state which is so infectious, communicated his knowledge to Montgomeri in the presence of Corisande, who with difficulty supported herself till he had concluded what he had to say. He made no comment; but his manner was sufficient to convince Corisande that the hour was now come that she had so long dreaded, and that, amidst the intricate and unwholesome labyrinths beneath the castle, or in the dark bowels of the rock, the unhappy De Beauvilliers would perish, the victim of his own rigid sense of honour.

The images of horror that now haunted her imagination Montgomeri vainly endeavoured to combat: in

truth, he felt them to be but too well founded; and while by a ſort of pious fraud he attempted to reaſon with the fears of his wife, it was eaſy for her to ſee that he did not himſelf believe what he tried to impreſs on her mind, and that her father's ſituation was now altogether deſperate.

Though that habitual reverence which he had ſo long cheriſhed for the name of Montgomeri prevented D'Angers himſelf from ſpeaking of his apprehenſions for his own ſafety if Montgomeri and Coriſande remained in his houſe, the members of his family were by no means ſo delicate and reſerved; and it appeared impoſſible for them to continue there, either on account of their own ſafety or that of their hoſts. Every hour ſome new alarm was given; and it ſeemed as if ſuſpicions were entertained of them by the few inhabitants of the houſes at the foot of the rock, ſince all refuſed to receive them as lodgers,

lodgers, and appeared uneaſy at the ſhort converſe with them, which their attempts to procure a temporary ſhelter made neceſſary.

The heireſs of De Beauvilliers, then, and the gallant ſon of the heroic Montgomeri were reduced to ſolicit an aſylum only for a few hours, and were every where repulſed. D'Angers would ſtill, though hazardous to himſelf, have ſuffered them to remain in his houſe; but Montgomeri, having once underſtood that the longer continuance of this hoſpitality was attended with riſk to D'Angers and his family, he would not liſten even to the imperious voice of neceſſity; and there was ſome probability that Coriſande might have paſſed in the ſtreets, had not Floreſtan at length found a very poor man, who, in a hut that hardly kept out the weather, where it was not defended by the huge rock, in a receſs of which it was built, ſupported himſelf, his wife, and two chil-

dren by fiſhing. His manner of life and his extreme poverty detached him from the other inhabitants; and having fewer fears, and by his little boat an eaſier means of eſcape, he conſented to receive the deſolate Coriſande and Montgomeri, fearing only for her, and never giving himſelf time to reflect on his own ſafety. How greatly it was endangered, however, his wife underſtood but too well by the difficulty which ſhe ſaw when they ſolicited to be received. Fatigue itſelf failed of procuring her repoſe; yet, with Montgomeri the moſt wretched cabin would have been a palace, had not the cruel ideas of her father's hopeleſs ſituation inflicted ſuch anguiſh as ſhe had never till then felt.

Montgomeri knew her apprehenſions were but too well founded; but to deſpair while any thing remained to be done was never yet the character of a great mind and an intrepid ſpirit. So fluctuating were the politics of the day,

that

that there was always hope of ſome favourable change; and, though the Guiſes had now the aſcendency, and in conſequence of it many ſeverities had been adopted, and the perſecution of the Proteſtants renewed with increaſed violence, yet it was always probable that the King's wavering and unſettled temper, and the ſuperior virtue and talents of Henry of Navarre, might in an inſtant change the face of affairs. But it was alſo unfortunately true, that De Beauvilliers might miſerably periſh before any ſuch revolution could ſave him; and Montgomeri knew that his own perſon was in extreme hazard, and that it was very probable there might be thoſe now lurking in the town who were charged to arreſt him. What would then become of Coriſande? to what evils might ſhe not be expoſed?

With thoughts like theſe corroding his mind, it was not poſſible to aſſume that appearance of tranquillity which

was neceſſary to reaſſure Coriſande. Could he once have ſeen what it would be beſt to do, he could ſteadily have purſued it; but, whichſoever way he looked, difficulty and danger beſet him. To leave Coriſande circumſtanced as ſhe now was, he could not bear to think of; yet he believed the hazard of their remaining where they were. The anxious and undecided manner which Coriſande obſerved, alarmed her more than any thing he could have ſaid. He was reſtleſs and ſilent—always ſeemed watchful, yet ſtudiouſly concealing his real thoughts, and ſometimes affecting to ſleep, that he might avoid her inquiring looks and tremulous queſtions.

At this cruel period, Coriſande gave an inſtance of that firmneſs which, wholly different from maſculine fierceneſs, is the higheſt attribute of a female mind. "Montgomeri," cried ſhe, "you have ſaid that there is yet ſome chance of my poor father's being reſtored to liberty,

liberty, if any event ſhould give the preponderance to the Calviniſt party, and reſtore the King of Navarre to influence. Go, therefore, my huſband, go, and once more place yourſelf where you can take advantage of circumſtances as they ariſe. I cannot be ignorant that you are yourſelf in danger here. Should you fall into the hands of our perſecutors, what would become of the wretched Coriſande, who has only you on earth?—By leaving me here, where I am not known, and can be of no conſequence, you may ſecure the ſafety of the two beings moſt dear to me, and by ſtaying you riſk every thing."

By theſe and other arguments, drawn from the ſame ſources, Coriſande inceſſantly endeavoured to prevail on Montgomeri to leave her; while he proteſted, that the miſery he ſhould ſuffer in ſuch a ſeparation, and his

ſolicitude for her ſafety, would render him altogether incapable of any attention to his own. Coriſande, however, returned again and again to the attempt, and at length extorted a promiſe from him that he would go to Avranches, inform himſelf of the actual circumſtances of his party, and what his honour dictated in regard to returning to his corps, which, by the direction of the King of Navarre, had diſperſed, and the individuals that compoſed it were gone into ſuch winter quarters as they could find.

Between the time that Coriſande left the Court of Catharine and the preſent period, many months had elapſed, and autumn was rapidly fading into winter.

Montgomeri, believing that ſomething might be done by his departure, yet dreading, even as the ſtroke of death, to leave his wife, his reſolution, which had never before failed him, would now have given way, had not Coriſande repreſſed

preſſed every fear which aroſe in her own boſom, and continually enforced all the motives that could arouſe and fortify his courage. He at length took all the precaution poſſible in ſuch a place for her ſafety, gave her all the money he poſſeſſed, which he adviſed her to conceal from the poor people where they lived, and whom he paid beforehand. He then tore himſelf away; and as the only additional ſecurity he could think of, he went to D'Angers, conjuring him by all the friendſhip and attachment he had borne his family, not wholly to abandon the protection of Coriſande. "That I might not riſk your ſafety," ſaid he, "I have forborne, ſince it was neceſſary to quit your houſe, to ſhow any ſigns of our former correſpondence: but now that the alarm ſeems to have ſubſided—at leaſt, ſince its effects are confined wholly to the changes in the priſon, where I know you can do no more to ſerve me, do

not refuſe to give ſuch aſſiſtance as you can to my wife, ſhould ſhe need it during my abſence. Probably, my old friend, this is the laſt trouble you will ever receive from the unfortunate race of Montgomeri."

D'Angers promiſed, that, ſhould any application be made to him on the part of Coriſande, he would give her what aſſiſtance was in his power. Floreſtan knew that, however cold his manner, his word was inviolable; and, leaving the rock, he took, in the appearance of a peaſant, the way to Avranches. There he could learn ſo very little of what he deſired to know, that he was compelled to proceed, and with a heavy and foreboding heart turned continually towards the ſea, gazing on the Mount St. Michel, till the intervening diſtance ſuffered him to dwell upon it no longer.

When he was gone, Coriſande, loſing all her heroiſm, ſunk into ſuch dejection, that, if the woman of the cottage,

tage, who was now become attached to her, had not aſſiduouſly attended to her, and perſuaded her to eat, ſhe would have ſat whole days abſorbed in ſad reflections, and totally unconſcious of the lapſe of time, and heedleſs of her own preſervation.

But though the unwelcome interruptions of her coarſe but well-meaning hoſteſs broke in upon her during the day, the nights were given almoſt entirely to melancholy reflections. From the low caſement of the poor hut that ſheltered her ſhe ſat gazing on the waves that ſeparated her from Montgomeri, or lifted her melancholy eyes towards the ſtupendous battlements and towers, within whoſe maſſy walls languiſhed, if he yet exiſted, her unhappy father. On that quarter hope ſeemed almoſt excluded: encloſed in a living ſepulchre, it was hardly poſſible that De Beauvilliers, whoſe health had been ſo long declining, and who ſeemed to deſire

life only while he could have the comfort of ſeeing his daughter and Floreſtan, ſhould have conſtitutional ſtrength to reſiſt the pain inflicted by this cruel ſeparation, and the certainty of being ſeparated from them for ever.

A MELANCHOLY month paſſed ſlowly away: it was a much longer period than Coriſande had been taught to believe would elapſe before the return of Montgomeri; and, as it drew towards a cloſe, her uneaſineſs became inſupportable. Wholly careleſs of outward circumſtances, ſhe wandered along the margin of the rock inſenſible to the wild blaſts of November, that drove the mountain billows from the north-weſt impetuouſly into the bay.

The

The high and adverſe tides would now make the return of Montgomeri more difficult; for the Mount St. Michel was almoſt inacceſſible in boiſterous weather, and in ſtrong winds. But, would he indeed return if the weather was leſs contrary? How many misfortunes might not have befallen him, that might prevent her ever ſeeing him more? From this fearful probability of the heavieſt calamity, Coriſande was compelled to turn her eyes, or all the fortitude ſhe inherited from nature, or had acquired by reflection, and even by habit, during a courſe of misfortunes, which began with her earlieſt recollection, would never have ſuſtained her from day to day.

Her nights were paſſed, not in ſleep, but in liſtening to the loud guſts of wind, and the loud waves breaking on the rugged cliffs that ſurrounded the iſland. "Does my father, through the deep windows of his priſon, hear what

what I hear? Does he yet live, and does he think of me?" Such were her inquiries during the ſtormy nights, as ſhuddering ſhe ſought her miſerable pallet. The cottage was on that edge of rock the moſt remote from the coaſt of France, and looking towards the Engliſh Channel. The rays of the morning, therefore, for which ſhe watched, did not ſhow her the ſpot from whence her only ſuccour or relief could come; and yet every little boat that approached the ſhore made her heart leap with hope, which ſoon faded. It was too certain, that of all the favourable events Montgomeri had anticipated, none had happened; and, unleſs ſome ſiniſter accident had befallen him, he would at all events have been with her.

Another and another week paſſed on; the winter came in all its ſeverity to add perſonal inconveniences to the intolerable anguiſh of her mind. Fearful viſions now haunted her: ſhe beheld

Montgomeri

Montgomeri in every poſſible ſtate of miſery; wounded, a priſoner, languiſhing on a ſick bed, and calling in vain on her, who heard him not, who might never again behold either him or her father. Unable to endure theſe dreadful apprehenſions, ſhe took the deſperate reſolution of knowing the worſt. The poor man and his wife were by this time wholly devoted to her; for, amidſt all her own ſufferings, ſhe had ever appeared ſenſible of theirs; and the diſlike which the diſtinction of rank often creates among the poor towards thoſe above them, was to them only an additional reaſon to love Coriſande, who was, they knew, a *Demoiſelle*, a perſon of ſuperior birth, and the wife of a *Cavalier*, who was alſo *très noble;* yet ſhe treated them with gentleneſs, and was intereſted in their welfare; which attached them much more than the money they had gained, or hoped to gain, from her reſidence in their humble cabin.

cabin. The man, therefore, was eaſily prevailed upon to convey her in his boat to the ſhore near Avranches. She left in the hovel he inhabited every thing but a change of clothes, reſerved only a ſmall ſum of money, and, paying them the reſt, as it was poſſible ſhe might not return, took leave of her weeping hoſteſs, and embarked.

The weather was dark and ſtormy, the ſea ran high; and Coriſande, having never before been on the water, might have felt perſonal fear, but that her thoughts were engroſſed by her father. She was now quitting the ſpot where poſſibly he yet dragged on life, the victim of vindictive tyranny on the part of others, and of exalted honour on his own. The frowning walls now diſappearing in the miſty gloom, were to be at once his priſon and his grave. The anguiſh theſe reflections inflicted was mitigated only by the poſſibility that Montgomeri was yet employed in endeavouring

deavouring to obtain his releaſe: but the dangers he was himſelf expoſed to, and the cruel doubts that forced themſelves on her mind as to his ſafety, not only cruſhed theſe hopes, but threw her into that languor, which is the conſequence of diſappointment approaching deſpair.

In this diſtreſſing ſtate it was, however, neceſſary for Coriſande to exert herſelf. Her conductor, leaving his boat in a cove of the rock, accompanied her to a poor village, about two miles up the country, where ſhe might unqueſtioned paſs into the road leading towards Paris; for, there only it was probable ſhe ſhould hear of Montgomeri, though how, or to whom to apply ſhe knew not. While the dangers to which her preſent undertaking expoſed her were at ſome diſtance, Coriſande imagined ſhe could brave them; but now, when the man, who was a ſort

of

of temporary protector, quitted her, and she was left amidst peasants who noticed her not, and was immediately to encounter the dangers of passing alone through a country still the seat of civil war, her heart sunk, and she had occasion to recall to her mind the little value of the life she was thus about to risk, before she could find resolution to pursue her melancholy road.

The trifling additions that marked a pilgrim, added to the dress of a peasant youth, were, she thought, some protection; but, in endeavouring to alter her feminine appearance, she incurred another risk, of which she had never thought. Since the first expedition when she assumed masculine attire, Corisande had become considerably taller; and, in a country where parties of soldiers were continually wandering about, eager to recruit their numbers, daily diminished by the war and its consequences,

ſequences, a tall youth, ſuch as ſhe now appeared to be, could hardly eſcape from being compelled to take a part with either one or other of the contending factions.

Unconſcious of her danger, and encouraged to greater exertion by finding herſelf yet unmoleſted and leſs fatigued than ſhe expected, the poor pilgrim had already advanced within a mile of a village called Brioze, whither the fiſherman had directed her, having told her that ſhe might there hire *a bourique* of a man he knew, and who was accuſtomed to carry various ſpecies of proviſion to Rouen, and ſometimes to Paris.—Near the ſmall *bourg* of Brioze was a heathy tract of country, called *les landes de Brioze.* When Coriſande entered on this deſolate line of wild and uncultivated ground ſhe was extremely fatigued, and of its extent there appeared to be no end. But at length the diſtant ſpire of the village church appearing above

above the flat ſurface, though very far off, ſomewhat reaſſured her; and the directions of her friendly hoſt having guided her thus far in ſecurity, there was reaſon to hope that ſhe ſhould now reach a place where a ſafe though very humble conveyance might be found for the reſt of her journey.

But, while Coriſande exerted all her remaining ſtrength to arrive at Brioze before night-fall, ſhe ſaw ſuddenly galloping towards her a number of armed horſemen. They came up to her before it was poſſible for her even to think of eſcape, or concealment. To the *Qui vive?* with which it was the general cuſtom to accoſt all paſſengers, ſhe was diſabled by fear from anſwering. One of them diſmounted and queſtioned her. She endeavoured to give ſuch an account of herſelf as might make them believe her to be what ſhe appeared: but her voice failed her, and ſhe was totally incapable of making any reſiſtance,

ance, when he who appeared to be the commander of the party directed two of the men to lift the ſtranger-youth on horſeback. He was immediately obeyed; and Coriſande found herſelf, after a moſt fatiguing and diſtreſſing journey, at a town, which ſhe afterwards learned was Argental. Theſe were the head quarters of the Duke of Guiſe, who was now collecting troops, and becoming more formidable than ever to his ſovereign, though he ſtill temporiſed and kept up appearances, pretending that the levies he was making were for the protection of the throne.

The officer into whoſe hands Coriſande had fallen, believing that ſhe was a very different perſon than what ſhe endeavoured to repreſent, conducted her immediately to the Duke of Guiſe, to whom he communicated his ſuſpicions that the peaſant lad was a woman, and one of no common rank. Pale, trembling, and hardly able to ſuſtain herſelf,

Coriſande

Coriſande felt it to be impoſſible that ſhe could continue the part ſhe had undertaken, and ſuddenly reſolved to relate who ſhe was, whence ſhe came, and every particular, ſave only her marriage with Montgomeri, whoſe very name was ſo obnoxious to the Catholics, and whoſe ſafety might be involved in her avowal. The Duke was, on her appearance, inſtantly aſſured that it was no pilgrim boy, but a very lovely woman; while the dignity of his manner and perſon, and a countenance which nature ſeemed to have marked for command, gave Coriſande confidence. She declared herſelf the daughter of the unfortunate long-impriſoned Count de Beauvilliers, and that ſhe had left Mount St. Michel when his confinement became more ſevere, in hopes of finding friends who might obtain for her leave to ſhare it, if his releaſe was ſtill denied. The Duke gave her not time to finiſh this brief hiſtory, before

fore he declared the reſpect and admiration with which her conduct and her perſon inſpired him. He beſought her to conſider him as her friend, and to allow him to call himſelf her protector, till ſhe could be reſtored to the rank and appearance ſhe might ſo juſtly claim. Far from ſeeming deſirous of taking any advantage of the accident that had thrown her into his power, he deſired ſhe would conſider herſelf as abſolutely at liberty to do whatever ſeemed good in her eyes, reſerving only to himſelf the means of protecting her from the danger her filial piety might involve her in, ſhould ſhe again expoſe herſelf a lonely wanderer through a country, where civil diſcord had long ſince put an end to all civil polity.

Coriſande expreſſed her gratitude for generoſity ſo unexpected, in words that increaſed the tender admiration of the Duke. He forgot, while he gazed on her, and heard her, that he was already married;

married; he forgot that Margaret de Valois had ſtill too many claims on his gratitude, if not on his affection; and a more recent attachment, in which he had hazarded the peace of a woman, reſpectable till his acquaintance with her began, was equally driven from his memory. Even ambition, the firſt principle of all his actions, yielded at the moment to the violence of this new paſſion. He ſaw only Coriſande in the world, and to her the world, had he poſſeſſed it, would have ſeemed too ſmall a ſacrifice. He expreſſed, however, ſo much reſpect for her virtues, and ſo well concealed under it this attachment to her perſon, that, not imagining it poſſible ſhe could in ſuch an appearance create any ſentiment but pity in the mind of any man, and particularly in that of the Duke of Guiſe, of whoſe haughty ambitious ſpirit ſhe had heard ſo much, and whom ſhe knew to be a married man, Coriſande became

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as eaſy in her preſent ſituation as her miſerable anxiety for Montgomeri and her father would ſuffer her to be. The Duke propoſed her taking a female attendant, and furniſhing herſelf with clothes, before they began their journey to Blois, whither he ſaid he would conduct her, placing her when there under the protection of his mother, with whom ſhe would be alike ſafe from the power of the Queen Catharine, and thoſe pretenders to her favour whom ſhe had ſo properly rejected. Coriſande, who knew not whither to go, and had no means, either of ſecurity or information, better than ſhe could obtain by accepting this propoſal, conſented, though not without much reluctance and many fears.

The Duke of Guiſe, now more enamoured than ever, purſued his ambitious projects with more alacrity, becauſe he ſaw that nothing but ſucceſs could ſecure to him the power of ſilencing all other

competitors; and his undaunted ſpirit ſuffered him not to doubt being ſoon ſo ſituated as to render all competition ridiculous, and reſiſtance to his will impoſſible. Henry the Third at preſent kept his Court at Blois, where the Eſtates were ſummoned to meet him. The Duke of Guiſe had been warned by aſtrologers, to whom great faith was lent in that age, that ſome fatal event would be the conſequence of his attending this meeting; but diſdaining the information, which he thought came not from the ſtars, but was a fineſſe of his enemies, who dreaded his appearance, he ſet out for Blois with a conſiderable retinue, of which Coriſande moſt unwillingly made a part.

The diſſimulation and perfidy which ſeemed to be the ſtudy of both parties, prevented thoſe who attended on the Queen Mother from openly expreſſing their aſtoniſhment at the return of Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers, under circumſtances

cumſtances which ſeemed to declare her to be the miſtreſs of the Duke of Guiſe. To his mother only, who had apartments in the caſtle, the Duke deigned to explain this extraordinary appearance. His will was to her a law. She ſaw Coriſande, heard her ſtory, and believed it; for falſehood never looked or ſpoke as ſhe did, and the Ducheſs was a woman of a high and liberal ſpirit. Coriſande, therefore, was received with ſo much goodneſs, and the manner of this reſpectable woman towards her was ſo kind and conſiderate, that ſhe endured with patience the irkſome ceremonies ſhe had to go through of accounting to ſome of her former acquaintance for her conduct, and of making, as ſhe was directed by the Ducheſs, an apology to Catharine. The old Queen, whoſe fatal interference had by this time ſo embarraſſed the affairs of her ſon, and ſo ruined the unfortunate people, that it ſeemed impoſſible to apply any remedy, was now ſuf-

fering under perſonal diſeaſe and mental remorſe. She gave little attention to thoſe who were formerly conſidered, only as they were inſtruments of her wretched politics, and ſhe did not receive Coriſande with leſs civility for believing; (what was the opinion of all who now ſaw her, except the Ducheſs, her protectrice) that ſhe was actually the miſtreſs of the Duke of Guiſe.

But Coriſande herſelf was, when alone, more than ever wretched. Deprived of all opportunities of hearing of her father's fate, and not daring to inquire after Montgomeri, ſhe wandered over the ſplendid apartments of the magnificent palace, more ſolitary, and infinitely more wretched than ſhe had ever been in the hut under the rocks of Mount St. Michel. Every one ſeemed buſy; the courtiers and officers paſſed and repaſſed through the apartments; new faces every day appeared; and kept wakeful herſelf by the increaſing anguiſh of her heart,

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ſhe found that midnight councils and ſecret cabals were held in a ſmall tower, terminating a wing of the building; towards which an half concealed window of her cabinet had a diſtinct view. But among all the perſons whom ſhe daily ſaw, there was not one who ſeemed intereſted for her; and the Duke of Guiſe, who now only came on pretence of viſiting his mother, though he treated her with reſpect almoſt bordering on adoration, and while he was with her ſeemed to forget every thing elſe, yet gave her no opportunity of ſpeaking of De Beauvilliers, and hurried away whenever ſhe attempted to introduce any ſubject that could lead to that.

With inexpreſſible anguiſh and horror of mind ſhe collected from various perſons with whom ſhe converſed, that for many weeks paſſed the Hugonots had ſuffered only defeat; that many of them had been killed, and more made priſoners; it appeared to be almoſt impoſſible

that Montgomeri had eſcaped one or other of theſe misfortunes.

While this cruel apprehenſion daily gained ſtrength, another conviction gave to the unhappy Coriſande a greater dread of life ſuch as ſhe now endured, with a greater deſire to live; ſhe was likely to give birth to a child of her adored Montgomeri, which would be the object of his fondeſt affection. Towards her own parent too, ſhe felt all her tenderneſs increaſe, and, without knowing why, cheriſhed again the revived hope that he yet lived. It was three months now ſince ſhe had parted with Montgomeri. A page in the palace with whom ſhe continued to converſe, named to her the principal proteſtant gentlemen who had fallen during that time. The appellation that Montgomeri had taken, after (having entered into the ſervice of the King of Navarre) he dropped that of Infelici, was St. Hermine; no ſuch name was among thoſe

officers

officers reported to have been killed, and Coriſande thought that the daring bravery of Montgomeri would have made him too conſpicuous to have been overlooked, had he fallen: ſtill the uncertainty was moſt dreadful, and the miſery it inflicted was ſoon aggravated by troubles of a new deſcription.

The behaviour of the Duke of Guiſe became more particular; he ſeemed to be incapable of longer concealing the violent paſſion he had conceived for Coriſande, and to be on the point of ſacrificing to that paſſion every other conſideration. Even the reſpect he owed to his mother, under whoſe care he had himſelf placed her, appeared likely to be forgotten; and towards Coriſande he ſo ſuddenly changed his conduct, that ſhe determined to entreat the Ducheſs to afford her ſome aſylum againſt what ſhe could not but conſider as cancelling every obligation that his former generoſity had beſtowed. This

application madame de Guiſe anſwered with ſo much ſcorn and aſperity, that the wretched Coriſande, diſſolved in tears, was unable to ſpeak in her own defence; unable to repel the charges of deception and hypocriſy that were now ſuddenly brought againſt her. That ſhe was the daughter of De Beauvilliers was allowed, but the Ducheſs of Guiſe now told her that her former conduct had been inquired into, and had been found erroneous, even from her firſt appearance in the world. Reſpect for the Queen of Navarre alone ſeemed to check the acrimony with which ſhe was diſpoſed to relate the diſgrace which had been attached to the earlier life of Coriſande—and the good lady declared that nothing but her conſideration for a young woman of family, would prevent her diſmiſſing Mademoiſelle de Beauvilliers that moment from her protection.

Coriſande now felt all her native ſpirit animated by the proud conſciouſneſs of

of innocence; but to vindicate herſelf againſt preſent appearances was impoſſible, without naming Montgomeri; and an accuſation ſo unexpected, added to the anxieties that had ſo long preyed on her heart, left her only ſtrength to ſay, that the following day ſhould fully juſtify her conduct, and remove her from any future hazard of treatment ſo inhuman and ſo little deſerved.

The unfortunate Coriſande had juſt ſtrength to retire to her own apartment, where, with a deſperate kind of reſolution, ſhe prepared immediately to depart, though ſhe knew not whither to go, or what was to become of her—the world ſeemed to be no longer an abode for her; every party, however inimical to each other, were equally enemies to her honour and her repoſe; and thoſe who agreed in nothing elſe, ſeemed to unite in perſecuting her, defenceleſs as ſhe was, and robbed of all that could give either ſafety or value to her life.

Oppreſſed by ſuch diſtreſſing reflections, it was uſeleſs to attempt to ſleep; yet Coriſande having diſmiſſed her attendant, lay down for a few hours, and endeavoured to reaſon herſelf into ſome degree of courage and fortitude, by recollecting how often ſhe had been delivered, by the unexpected intervention of providential circumſtances, from evils even greater than that which immediately threatened her.

Theſe thoughts had reſtored to her reſolution to meet what ſhe apprehended to be inevitable on the following morning, when ſhe muſt again become a lonely pilgrim, and, though innocent, bear all the ignominy of guilt.

The next morning, however, preſented a ſcene which changed not only the circumſtances of Coriſande, but gave a new appearance to the affairs of France. For on that morning the Duke of Guiſe, having been ſummoned at an early hour to attend the King in his cabinet,

cabinet, where the council was to aſſemble, was aſſaſſinated with many wounds, as he lifted up the arras to enter the cloſet. The confuſion that followed ſuch an incident may be imagined. Nobody thought of Coriſande, nor could ſhe for a conſiderable time diſcover the real cauſe of the hurry and diſtraction that appeared in the caſtle; nor did ſhe know why, when ſhe learned the melancholy event*, ſhe was herſelf put under arreſt. The Ducheſs of Guiſe was ſent priſoner to the caſtle of Amboiſe, conſtrained to endure ſuſpenſe which ſhe had no means of ending. Coriſande, attended by her ſervant, remained ſome days a priſoner. She was then ſurpriſed and relieved by the appearance of the

* The Duke of Guiſe, and his brother the Cardinal, were killed in the caſtle of Blois on the 23d of December 1588. Their bodies were conſumed to aſhes in the chimney of a large hall, that no remains of them might be left to gratify the enthuſiaſm of the people, by whom the Duke was adored.

King of Navarre, who, with all that generoſity and genuine goodneſs of heart which ſo ſtrongly marked his character, expreſſed the livelieſt ſenſe of her ſituation, aſſured her of his protection, and that he would give immediate orders that every inquiry ſhould be made about Montgomeri, of whom (and it was with inexpreſſible anguiſh ſhe heard it) Coriſande ſoon learned that the King knew nothing; not having had any intelligence of him ſince he went with a detachment of Proteſtants on a ſervice of great danger; after which, though he was not among the ſlain, no account had been heard of him as a priſoner. The preſent ſtate of De Beauvilliers too, whether he yet lived, or had fallen a victim to prolonged and more rigorous confinement, was equally a ſubject of ſolicitude. Coriſande, conſidering the King of Navarre rather as her father than as a monarch, heſitated not to relate to him the hiſtory of Montgomeri

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and of herſelf ſince her involuntary diſappearance; and if he had before felt an intereſt in whatever concerned them, that intereſt was redoubled by her narrative. Henry, ſo unaccuſtomed to check his inclination for any woman whoſe perſon was pleaſing to him, felt his admiration of Coriſande tempered with ſo much reſpect for her, and regard for Montgomeri, that, far from meditating how to interrupt it, he found their happineſs neceſſary to his own.

The King of France, the difficulties of whoſe ſituation had been greatly increaſed by the aſſaſſination of the Duke and Cardinal de Guiſe, was at this time compelled to unite himſelf to the King of Navarre, as nothing but ſuch an alliance could ſave him from the effects of the ſtorm gathering on all quarters againſt him. His mother now ſaw the miſchief of her own inſidious and dangerous policy, and his weakneſs and irreſolution, had brought upon themſelves, and the

the confuſion and anarchy in which the kingdom was involved. The reproaches of her conſcience were added to the pangs of diſeaſe. She died unregretted ſoon after the murder of the Guiſes, and was remembered only for the miſeries of which ſhe had been the chief inſtrument, and which long afflicted the unhappy kingdom.

The aſcendancy of the King of Navarre, however, then gave him an opportunity of relieving many of his faithful adherents who had ſuffered in his cauſe. De Beauvilliers was among the firſt, and it was with infinite ſatisfaction he heard from a confidential perſon whom he had ſent to Mount St. Michel, that De Beauvilliers, once more reſcued from the horrors of cloſe impriſonment, lived to embrace and bleſs his daughter—that daughter whoſe beloved idea had cheered his ſolitary hours in the dungeon where he had near ſix months been confined; and to whoſe piety he always believed

lieved Providence would grant the means of his reſcue.

Coriſande no ſooner heard from the King of Navarre theſe welcome tidings, than ſhe beſought him to permit her to ſeek her father. Henry, who knew too well how frail was the foundation of his preſent power, not only conſented, but obtained the entire releaſe of the Count de Beauvilliers from his priſon, with an order that he might be permitted, unqueſtioned, to go whitherſoever he would. The King's humanity did not ſtop there. He ſupplied Coriſande with money, gave her letters to perſons in whom he could confide, and adviſed her to haſten with her father to England. "There," ſaid he, "our brave Montgomeri, who is I perſuade myſelf living, will meet you; and meet you in that ſecurity, which, notwithſtanding preſent appearances, I dare not flatter myſelf can yet be found in France." Coriſande, ſpeechleſs from the many contradictory

dictory ſenſations ſhe now felt, took a ſilent but not leſs affecting leave of her generous protector, and, after a journey very different from the firſt, arrived at the priſon of De Beauvilliers.—It is eaſier to imagine than to deſcribe the meeting between the father and the daughter—their joy empoiſoned by the abſence of Montgomeri, and the doubts that aſſailed them both, whether he would ever rejoin them. Coriſande, however, checked, in the preſence of her father, the expreſſion at leaſt of the anguiſh that tore her heart, and, ſince it ſeemed to be her deſtiny never to ſee together the two beings whom ſhe loved, devoted herſelf apparently to the comfort of him whom Providence had reſtored to her prayers. De Beauvilliers indeed, whoſe health had again ſeverely ſuffered, watched every look and word of Coriſande with a degree of anxiety, ſo eager and unremitting, as could not fail to be injurious to himſelf, while of

Montgomeri's

Montgomeri's ſafety he endeavoured to encourage hopes, which Coriſande was well convinced he did not entertain.

It was, however, neceſſary to obey the directions of the King of Navarre. They arrived without accident in England, and found a reception equal to their expectations, from the letters they carried with them. But Coriſande, who beheld the ſea between her and the country that held Montgomeri, if he yet lived, could not think without pain of removing from its margin. The ſea appeared to be the only medium by which ſhe could again behold or receive news of him; and her father, to whom all places were alike, conſented to reſide in a ſmall houſe on the weſtern ſide of Dover, from whence the coaſt of France was almoſt always diſcernible.

There ſhe gave birth to a ſon, over whom ſhe wept in agonizing fondneſs, endeavouring for his ſake to preſerve her health, while ſhe deplored his father,

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of whoſe life ſhe now almoſt entirely deſpaired; for no intelligence had been gained, notwithſtanding the inquiries of the King of Navarre, and of many of the Proteſtant lords, who openly aſſerted their principles, and in whoſe bravery, and the affection of their leader, Henry de Valois found his chief ſecurity againſt the deſigns of the League, now become more than ever formidable.

To loſe a being, fondly beloved, is dreadful; but to be tormented with conjectures as to the manner of that loſs, to imagine that his death might be embittered by famine or by tortures, adds tenfold anguiſh to the deprivation; and Coriſande, ingenious in miſery, ceaſed not to picture every ſpecies of wretchedneſs which her huſband might have ſuffered. Months paſſed on. De Beauvilliers, long accuſtomed to reſign himſelf to misfortune, was tranquil, though unhappy. The infant of Coriſande, towards whom he looked as the heir of his eſtates, and

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the repreſentative of his family, became every day more dear to him; but nothing really conſoled him for the death of Montgomeri, whom he loved, on Coriſande's account and his own, with affection more than paternal.

The little boy was now eleven months old. His attempts to ſpeak, which the mother and grandfather thought indicated uncommon intelligence; his features, that, as they became more formed, more ſtrongly reſembled thoſe of his father, all contributed to increaſe the tenderneſs they felt for him: and it was for his ſake rather than their own that De Beauvilliers heard with ſatisfaction, that, Henry de Valois being no more*, Henry de Bourbon was now King of France again. To ſerve the maſter to whom his youth had been devoted, the Count de Beauvilliers determined to quit his retirement and paſs into France. Coriſande, whoſe heart only bled the more when proſperity ſeemed likely to

* He was ſtabbed by Clement, a monk.

return, that Montgomeri would never ſhare, prepared herſelf and her ſon to accompany her father; and having occaſion to purchaſe a few neceſſaries at the town, ſhe walked thither; her child carried in the arms of an Engliſh girl who had ſome time lived with her.——They were returning, when two men, who appeared to be Turks or Algerines, extremely poor and diſtreſſed, followed them, and, in a jargon which reſembled French rather than the dialect of their own country, ſolicited charity. The Engliſh ſervant, in ſome alarm, repulſed them; but Coriſande, whoſe heart was never ſhut againſt the wretched of whatever appearance, ſtopped, and, beſtowing her alms, ſpoke to the poor ſtranger in French. The beggar, changing his voice, anſwered her in the ſame language, and told her with great emotion, that, ſince ſhe was of France, ſhe would ſurely have compaſſion on a wretched man of that country, who lay

dying

dying a little further on, with no other ſhelter than the cliffs afforded him, and abſolutely without the means of procuring wherewithal to moiſten his parched lips, or a place wherein he could die. Shocked by ſuch a picture, Coriſande haſtened to the place. She ſaw, extended on the ground, a poor man apparently dying. She approached and ſpoke to him. At the ſound of her voice he lifted up his head, and, fixing his eyes earneſtly on her face, uttered in a faint voice the name of Coriſande! and fell back ſenſeleſs; while, throwing herſelf down by him, and franticly ſhrieking for help, ſhe called on Montgomeri!

The ſervant, amazed and terrified at what ſhe ſaw, ran for aſſiſtance to the houſe. De Beauvilliers and his ſervant, bringing with them whatever of refreſhment they could firſt find, were ſoon at the ſpot. The Count, breathleſs, and hardly conſcious of what he did, cauſed the

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ſtill apparently dying Montgomeri to be conveyed to his houſe. Coriſande collected, in this trying moment, that preſence of mind which had on ſo many perilous occaſions befriended her. Montgomeri was not dead; there was then a poſſibility of ſaving him: and he was at length reſtored to his recollection, and found himſelf in bed—De Beauvilliers holding one of his hands, and Coriſande bending earneſtly over him, with a look of ſo much tender anguiſh as never could be effaced from his memory. The firſt uſe he made of the power of ſpeech was, after trying to expreſs what he felt towards his wife and the Count, to recommend his unhappy comrades to their care. The wants of thoſe poor men had been already attended to, and they were taken into the houſe; where, in ſome days, the life of Montgomeri appeared to be out of hazard. But it was not till two of thoſe days had paſſed that Coriſande thought

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it ſafe to truſt him with the delight of beholding his boy; and it was much longer before ſhe ventured to aſk him to relate the cauſe of his long abſence, and of his ſtill more extraordinary appearance under ſuch circumſtances of miſery.

When at length he was ſo far re-eſtabliſhed in his health as to enable him to ſpeak of what had paſſed ſince their ſeparation, he thus accounted for all that had occaſioned her aſtoniſhment and her grief:—

"When I left you at Mount St. Michel I paſſed over to Avranches, with little hope, I own, of hearing any news likely to aſſuage your anxiety or my own. I was there met by a confidential friend, a lieutenant in my regiment, ſent in ſearch of me by order of the King of Navarre, who wiſhed to entruſt me with the execution of a very hazardous project, of which the Marquis de Roſney* had given the plan,

* Afterwards the juſtly celebrated Duke de Sully.

and,

and in doing ſo, had named me as the propereſt perſon to entruſt it to, on account of my knowledge of the country around Montmelian, (to poſſeſs which was his object) as well as of other qualities he was pleaſed to impute to me. Coriſande, could I decline this duty? Certainly not. I knew that you would have enjoined its performance. I wrote to you however by a boatman, but he took no care to deliver my letter. Then, counteracting the anguiſh inflicted by being compelled to leave you, with the hope of ſucceſs, and of our meeting to rejoice in it, I proceeded acroſs the whole kingdom, and endeavoured to execute the orders I had received. I will not dwell on this attempt. The enemy, apprized of them by treachery, and five times our numbers, were too much for our ſmall and ill-appointed party. I was made priſoner, and, had my real name been known, I ſhould have ſuffered death. Under the fictitious name I bore,

I bore, I was ſent priſoner to Aubagne, not far from Marſeilles. I will hereafter relate more fully how I effected my eſcape, and endeavoured to paſs round by ſea to the Norman coaſt; but the veſſel in which I embarked was taken off Monduca by a pirate, and carried to Tetuan; where, utterly hopeleſs of my ranſom, or of ever ſeeing you more, I endured a living death, till about five months ago, when the moor died whoſe property I was; and his heir, deſirous of removing from thence, ſold his ſlaves for a very trifling conſideration; and I was purchaſed by the ſociety of *les Freres de la Miſericorde* *, who could, however, do no more for me than give me my liberty. I obtained, however, of an Engliſhman who was in the port to trade, leave to work my paſſage to Eng-

* The Brethren of Mercy: an aſſociation of pious perſons, who ſubſcribe and ſend miſſionaries for the redemption of Chriſtians, ſlaves among the Mahometans.

land on board his ſhip; and with two other Frenchmen, natives of Provence, who had been captives longer than I had been, I found myſelf, without clothes, money, or friends, put on ſhore on the banks of the Thames. Our wiſh was to haſten to that part of the Engliſh coaſt oppoſite our own; but innumerable hardſhips and difficulties beſet us in our journey. At laſt we reached, though almoſt ſtarved, the borders of the ſea near Dover. But by that time I was exhauſted by famine and fatigue. Diſappointment too added its ſharpeſt pangs; for we ſolicited a paſſage in vain; and when, even within its view, I deſpaired of ever putting my feet again on my native ſoil — of ever reaching the country where my Coriſande awaited me—woes ſo complicated and of ſo long continuance, conquered my reſolution; and my diſeaſe, aggravated by the ſtate of my mind, would in a very ſhort time have deſtroyed me, had not relenting Heaven

ſent

ſent *thee*, my guardian angel, my Coriſande, to recall me from the brink of the grave."

As ſoon as Montgomeri had ſtrength to undertake it, the family of De Beauvilliers returned to France. He was there reinſtated in the poſſeſſion of the Caſtle of Montrichard, and of all the property he had been deprived of; but neither his age nor infirmities prevented his entering, with all the ardour of youth, into the ſervice of the King. Montgomeri obtained a rank in the army proportioned to his merit and his birth. Their toils were ſweetened by returning, as often as thoſe toils remitted, to the domeſtic ſcene where Coriſande, ſo adored by both, ſurrounded by a lovely family, received a father and a huſband, dearer for the perils to which they were too frequently expoſed—till Henry, having united all parties, reſtored, at leaſt for a time, tranquillity and proſperity to his people.

His faithful ſervants were not forgotten; and the houſe of Montgomeri de Beauvilliers, having partaken of the honourable adverſity of the King of Navarre, was elevated to the moſt proſperous fortune that could be beſtowed by the King of France.

I here end my hiſtory, which I have written at many and long intervals, ſlowly travelling towards Paris, where I do not intend to ſtay longer than to receive ſome remittances and letters from England. I ſhall then, I believe, direct my courſe towards Germany, and you ſhall hear, when he has any thing worth telling you, from your friend, who, in the words of Dr. Johnſon, may well deſcribe himſelf as

" A kind

" A kind of Solitary Wanderer in
" the wild of life, without any direction
" or fixed point of view; a gloomy
" gazer on the world to which I have
" little relation."

May you, my friend, be happier!

END OF THE THIRD VOLUME.

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ERRATA. VOL. II.

Page 13, Line 2, for *Denbigh* read *Maynard.*
—— 108, —— 22, for *abhor* read *deteſt.*
—— 175, —— 5, omit *himſelf.*
—— 181, —— 13, for *perſnade* read *perſuade*
—— 204, —— 3, for *to them* read *on them.*
—— 212, —— for *fidelity* read *infidelity.*
—— 228, —— 3, for *Mrs. George Denbigh* read *Mrs. George Maynard.*
—— 229, —— 3, for *fifteen* read *ſeventeen.*
—— 229, —— 15, omit the *ſtop* and the *and* after *reluctance.*
—— 229, —— 21, for *George Denbigh* read *George Maynard.*
—— 231, —— 16, for *inconſequence* read *in conſequence.*
—— 234, —— 2, for *Denbigh* read *Maynard.*
—— 237, —— 11, for *Denbigh* read *Maynard.*
—— 238, —— 10, for *perceive* read *diſtinguiſh.*
—— 245, —— 9, omit *in*
—— 255, —— 4, for *four* read *ſome.*
—— 279, —— 15, for *he* read *the earth.*
—— —— —— 19, for *quietyet* read *quiet, yet.*

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